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Fletcher, John William

AN

APPEAL

TO

MATTER OF FACT AND COMMON SENSE

OR,

A RATIONAL DEMONSTRATION

OF

MAN'S CORRUPT AND LOST ESTATE.

Ye pompous sons of Reason idolized
And vilifi'd at once; of Reason dead,
Then deifi'd as monarchs were of old;
Wrong not the Christian; think not Reason yours;
'Tis Reason our great Master holds so dear;
'Tis Reason's injured rights his wrath resents;
'Tis Reason's voice obey'd his glories crown,
To give lost Reason life he pour'd his own:
Believe, and show the Reason of a man;
Believe, and taste the pleasure of a God;
Through Reason's wounds alone thy faith can die.
YOUNG'S NIGHT THOUGHTS.

The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.—LUKE XIX, 18.

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R. P. THOMPSON, PRINTER.
1860.

AN

APPEAL

TO

MATTER OF FACT AND COMMON SENSE,

ON

A LATE NOTED DECISION

OF

MAN'S CONDUCT AND HIS DESTINY.

TO THE PRINCIPAL INHABITANTS OF THE PARISH OF MADELEY, IN THE COUNTY OF SALOP.

GENTLEMEN,—You are no less entitled to my private labors than the inferior class of my parishioners. As you do not choose to partake with them of my evening instructions, I take the liberty to present you with some of my morning meditations. May these well-meant endeavors of my pen be more acceptable to you than those of my tongue! And may you carefully read in your closets, what you have, perhaps, inattentively heard in the church! I appeal to the Searcher of hearts, that I had rather impart truth than receive tithes; you kindly bestow the latter upon me; grant me, I pray, the satisfaction of seeing you favorably receive the former, from, gentlemen,

Your affectionate minister,
And obedient servant,
J. FLETCHERE.

Madeley, 1772.

unconcern about himself. XX. His detestable tempers. XXI. The general outbreathings of human corruption in all individuals. XXII. The universal overflowing of it in all nations; five objections answered. XXIII. Some striking proofs of this depravity in the general propensity of mankind to vain, irrational, or cruel diversions. And, XXIV. In the universality of the most ridiculous, impious, inhuman, and diabolical sins. XXV. The aggravating circumstances attending the display of this corruption. XXVI. The many ineffectual endeavors to stem its torrent. XXVII. The obstinate resistance it makes to Divine grace in the unconverted. XXVIII. The amazing struggles of good men with it. XXIX. The testimony of the heathens and Deists concerning it. And after all, XXX. The preposterous conceit which the unconverted have of their own goodness.

FOURTH PART.

Man is considered as an inhabitant of the *Christian* world; and his fallen state is further proved by six Scriptural arguments, introduced by a short demonstration of the authenticity of the Scriptures, and by a little attack upon the amazing CREDULITY of Deists. The heads of these arguments are, XXXI. The impossibility that fallen, corrupt Adam should have had an upright, innocent posterity, with answers to some capital objections. XXXII. The spirituality and severity of God's law, which the unrenewed man continually breaks. And, XXXIII. Our strong propensity to unbelief, the most destructive of all sins, according to the Gospel. XXXIV. The absurdity of the Christian religion with respect to infants and strict moralists. XXXV. The harshness and cruelty of Christ's fundamental doctrines. And, XXXVI. The extravagance of the grand article of the Christian faith; *if* mankind are not in a corrupt and lost estate.

FIFTH PART.

The doctrine of man's fall being established by such a variety of arguments; first, a few *natural inferences* are added: secondly, various *fatal consequences* attending the ignorance of our lost estate: thirdly, the *unspeakable advantages* arising from the right knowledge of it.

INTRODUCTION.

In religious matters we easily run into extremes. Nothing is more common than to see people embracing one error, under the plausible pretense of avoiding another.

Many, through fear of infidelity, during the night of ignorance, and storm of passion, run against the wild rocks of superstition and enthusiasm; and frequently do it with such force, that they *make shipwreck of the faith*, and have little *of godliness* left, except a few broken pieces of its *form*.

Numbers, to shun that fatal error, steer quite a contrary course; supposing themselves guided by the compass of reason, when they only follow that of prejudice; with equal violence they dash their speculative brains against the opposite rocks of Deism and profaneness; and fondly congratulate themselves on escaping the shelves of fanaticism, while the leaky bark of their hopes is ready to sink, and that of their morals is, perhaps, sunk already. Thus, both equally overlook sober, rational, heart-felt piety, that lies between those wide and dangerous extremes.

To point out the happy medium which they have missed, and call them back to the narrow path where reason and revelation walk hand in hand, is the design of these sheets. May the *Father of lights* so shine upon the reader's mind,

that he may clearly discover Truth, and, notwithstanding the severity of her aspect, prefer her to the most soothing error!

If he is one of those who affect to be the warm votaries of reason, he is entreated to be a *close thinker*, as well as a *free* thinker; and with careful attention to consider reason's dictates, before he concludes that they agree with his favorite sentiments. He has, no doubt, too much candor not to grant so equitable a request; too much justice to set aside *matter of fact;* and too much good sense to disregard *an appeal to common sense.*

Should he incline to the opposite extreme, and cry down our rational powers, he is desired to remember, *right reason*, which is that I appeal to, is a ray of *the light that enlighteus every man who comes into the world*, and a beam of the eternal *Logos*, the glorious *Sun of righteousness.*

God, far from blaming a proper use of the noble faculty by which we are chiefly distinguished from Brutes, graciously invites us to the exercise of it: *Come, now*, says he, *and let us reason together.* Jesus *commends the unjust steward*, for reasoning better upon his wrong, than the children of light upon their right principles. Samuel desires the Israelites *to stand still, that he may* REASON *with them before the Lord.* St. Peter charges believers to *give an answer to every one that asketh them a* REASON *of their hope.* And St. Paul, who *reasoned* so conclusively himself, intimates that *wicked men are* UNREASONABLE; and declares that a total

dedication of ourselves to God is *our* REASONABLE *service;* and, while he challenges the vain *disputers of this world,* who would make jests pass for proofs, invectives for arguments, and sophistry for reason, he charges Titus to use, not merely *sound speech,* but as the original also means, SOUND REASON, *that he who is of the contrary part may be ashamed.*

Let us, then, following his advice and example, pay a due regard both to reason and revelation; so shall we, according to his candid direction, break the shackles of prejudice, *prove all things,* and, by Divine grace, *hold fast that which is good.*

AN APPEAL TO MATTER OF FACT.

FIRST PART.

In every religion there is a principal truth or error, which, like the first link of a chain, necessarily draws after it all the parts with which it is essentially connected. This leading principle, in Christianity, distinguished from Deism, is the doctrine of our corrupt and lost estate; for if man is not at variance with his Creator, what need of a Mediator between God and him? If he is not a depraved, undone creature, what necessity of so wonderful a Restorer and Savior as the Son of God? If he is not enslaved to sin, why is he redeemed by Jesus Christ? If he is not polluted, why must he be washed in the blood of that immaculate Lamb? If his soul is not disordered, what occasion is there for such a divine Physician? If he is not helpless and miserable, why is he perpetually invited to secure the assistance and consolations of the Holy Spirit? And, in a word, if he is not born in sin, why is a new birth so absolutely necessary, that Christ declares, with the most solemn asseverations, without it no man can see the kingdom of God?

This doctrine then being of such importance, that genuine Christianity stands or falls with it, it may be proper to state it at large; and as this can not be done in stronger and plainer words than those of the sacred writers, and our pious reformers, I beg leave to collect them and present the reader with a picture of our natural estate, drawn at full length by those ancient and masterly hands.

I. Moses, who informs us that God created man in his own image, and after his likeness, soon casts a shade upon his original dignity, by giving us a sad account of his fall. He represents him after his disobedience as a criminal under sentence of death; a wretch filled with guilt, shame, dread, and horror; and a vagabond, turned out of a lost paradise into a cursed wilderness, where all bears the stamp of desolation for his sake, Gen. iii, 17. In consequence of this apostasy he died, and all die in him; for by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned in him, who was all mankind seminally and federally collected in one individual, 1 Cor. xv, 22; Rom. v, 12.

The sacred historian, having informed us how the first man was corrupted, observes that he begat a son in his own image, sinful and mortal like himself; that his first-born was a murderer; that Abel himself offered sacrifices to avert Divine wrath, and that the violent temper of Cain soon broke out in all the human species. The earth, says he, was filled with violence, all flesh

had corrupted its way—and God saw the wickedness of man was great in the earth, so great, that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil, continually. *Only* evil, without any mixture of good; and *continually*, without any intermission of the evil, Gen. vi, 5.

When the Deluge was over, the Lord himself gave the same account of his obstinately-rebellious creature. The imagination of man's heart, said he to Noah, is evil from his youth, Gen. viii, 21. Job's friends paint us with the same colors; one of them observes, that man is born like the wild ass' colt, and another, that he is abominable and filthy, and drinks iniquity like water, Job xi, 12, and xv, 16.

David doth not alter the hideous portrait; the Lord, says he, looked down from heaven upon the children of men; to see if there were any that did understand and seek God. And the result of the Divine inspection is, they are all gone aside, they are altogether become filthy; there is none that doth good, no not one, Psalm xiv, 2. Solomon gives a finishing stroke to his father's draught, by informing us, that foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; and not of a child only, for he adds, The heart of the sons of men is full of evil, and while they live, madness is in their heart, Prov. xxii, 15; Eccl. ix, 3.

Isaiah corroborates the assertions of the royal prophets, in the following mournful confession: All we, like sheep, have gone astray—we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags, Isa. liii, 6, and lxiv, 6.

Jeremiah confirms the deplorable truth, where he says: The sin of Judah is written with a pen of iron, and with the point of a diamond; it is graven upon the tables of their hearts; O Jerusalem, wash thy feet from wickedness, that thou mayest be saved; for the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? Jer. iv, 14, and xvii, 1, 9.

Thus the prophets delineate mankind in a natural, impenitent state. And do the apostles dip their pencil in brighter colors? Let them speak for themselves. The chief of them informs us, that the natural, unrenewed man receives not the things of the Spirit of God, and that they are foolishness to him, 1 Cor. ii, 14. And he lays it down as matter of fact, that the carnal mind, the taste and disposition of every unregenerate person, is not only averse to goodness, but *enmity* itself against God, the adorable fountain of all excellence. A blacker line can hardly be drawn to describe a fallen, diabolical nature, Rom. viii, 7.

Various are the names which the apostle of the Gentiles gives to our original corruption; and they are all expressive of its pernicious nature and dreadful effects. He calls it emphatically sin, a sin so full of activity and energy, that it is the life and spring of all others; indwelling sin, a sin which is not like the leaves and fruit of a bad tree, that appear for a time, and then drop off, but like the sap that dwells and works within, always ready to break out at every bud; the body of sin, because it is an

assemblage of all possible sins in embryo, as our body is an assemblage of all the members which constitute the human frame; the law of sin, and the law in our members, because it hath a constraining force, and rules in our mortal bodies, as a mighty tyrant in the kingdom which he hath usurped; the old man, because we have it from the first man Adam, and because it is as old as the first stamina of our frame, with which it is most closely interwoven; the flesh, as being propagated by carnal generation, and always opposing the Spirit, the gracious principle, which we have from Adam the second; and concupiscence, the mystic Jezebel, who brings forth the infinite variety of fleshly, worldly, and mental lusts, which war against the soul.

Nor are St. James and St. John less severe than St. Paul upon the unconverted man. The one observes, that his wisdom, the best property naturally belonging to him, descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, and devilish; and the other positively declares, that the whole world lieth in wickedness, James iii, 15; 1 John v, 19.

Our Lord, whose Spirit inspired the prophets and apostles, confirms their lamentable testimony. To make us seriously consider sin, our mortal disease, he reminds us that the whole have no need of a physician, but they that are sick, Luke v, 31. He declares, that men love darkness rather than light. That the world hates him; and that its works are evil, John iii, 19, xv, 18, vii, 7. He directs all to pray for the

pardon of sin, as being evil, and owing ten thousand talents to their heavenly Creditor, Matt. vi, 12, viii, 11, xviii, 24. And he assures us, that the things which defile the man come from within; and that out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness, and, in a word, *all moral evil*, Mark vii, 21; Matt. xv, 19.

Some indeed confine what the Scriptures say of the depravity of the human heart, to the abandoned heathens and persecuting Jews; as if the professors of morality and Christianity were not concerned in the dreadful charge. But if the apostolic writings affirm that Christ came not to call the righteous, but *sinners*, that he died for the *ungodly*, and that he suffered, the just for the *unjust*, it is plain that, unless he did not suffer and die for moral men and Christians, they are by nature sinners, ungodly, and unjust as the rest of mankind, Rom. v, 6; 1 Pet. iii, 18.

If this assertion seems severe, let some of the best men that ever lived decide the point, not by the experience of immoral persons, but by their own. I abhor myself, says Job, and repent in dust and ashes, Job xlii, 6. Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, says David, and in sin did my mother conceive me, Psalm li, 5. Woe is me, for I am undone, says Isaiah, because I am a man of unclean lips, Isa. vi, 5. I know, says St. Paul, that in me, that is, in my flesh,

dwelleth no good thing, Rom. vii, 18. We ourselves, says he to Titus, were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another, Tit. iii, 3. And speaking of himself and the Christians at Ephesus, he leaves upon record this memorable sentence. We were *by nature* the children of wrath, even as others, Eph. ii, 3. Such humbling thoughts have the best of men entertained, both of their natural estate and themselves.

But as no one is a more proper person to appeal to, in this matter, than this learned apostle, who, by continually conversing with Jews, heathens, and Christians, in his travels, had such an opportunity of knowing mankind; let us hear him sum up the suffrages of his inspired brethren. What, then, says he, are we better than they? Better than the immoral Pagans and hypocritical Jews, described in the two preceding chapters? No, in nowise. And he proves it by observing: 1. The *universality* of human corruption; *all* are under sin, as it is written, there is *none* righteous, no, not *one*. 2. The *extent* of it in individuals, as it affects the whole man, especially his mind; there is none that understandeth the things of God. His affections, there is none that seeketh after God. And his actions, they are all gone out of the way of duty. There is none that doeth good, no, not one. For all have their conversation in the lusts of the flesh and of the mind. 3. The *outbreakings* of this corruption through all the parts of the body. Their throat,

their lips, their mouth, their feet, their eyes, and all their members, are together become unprofitable, and instruments of unrighteousness. As for their tongue, says St. James, it is a world of iniquity, it defileth the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature, and is set on fire of hell. And lastly, its *malignity* and *virulence:* it is loathsome as an open sepulcher, terrible as one who runs to shed blood, and mortal as the poison of asps.

From the whole, speaking of all mankind, in their unregenerate state, he justly infers that destruction and misery are in their ways. And, lest the self-righteous should flatter themselves, that this alarming declaration doth not regard them, he adds, that the Scriptures conclude *all* under sin; that there is no difference, for *all* have sinned and come short of the glory of God; and that the moral law denounces a general curse against its violators, that every *mouth* may be stopped, and *all the world* may become guilty before God, Rom. iii, 9–23, vi, 19; Eph. ii, 2.

If man is thus corrupt and guilty, he must be liable to condign punishment. Therefore, as the prophets and apostles agree with our Lord in their dismal descriptions of his depravity, so they harmonize with him in their alarming accounts of his danger. Till he flies to the Redeemer as a condemned malefactor, and secures an interest in the salvation provided for the lost, they represent him as on the brink of ruin.

They inform us that the wrath of God is revealed from heaven, not only against some

atrocious crimes, but against *all* unrighteousness of men, Rom. i, 18. That *every* transgression and disobedience shall receive a just recompense of reward, Heb. ii, 2. That the soul that sinneth shall die, because the wages of sin is death, Ezek. xviii, 4; Romans vi, 23. They declare, that they are cursed, who do err from God's commandments; that cursed is the man whose heart departeth from the Lord; that cursed is every one who continues not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them; that whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, is guilty of all; and that, as many as have sinned without law, shall also perish without law, Psalm cxix, 21; Jer. xvii, 5; Gal. iii, 10; James ii, 10; Rom. ii, 12.

They entreat us to turn, lest we should be found with the many in the broad way to destruction, Ezek. xviii, 23; Matt. vii, 13. They affectionately inform us, that it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God; that our God is a consuming fire to the unregenerate; that indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, hang over every soul of man who doeth evil; that the Lord shall be revealed from heaven in flaming fire, to take vengeance on them who know him not, and obey not the Gospel; that the wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the people that forget God; that they shall be punished with eternal destruction, from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; and that they all shall be damned who believe not the truth, but have pleasure in unrighteous-

ness, Heb. x, 31, xii, 29; Rom. ii, 9; 2 Thess. i, 8, ii, 12; Psalm ix, 17.

Nor does our Lord, who is both the fountain and pattern of true charity, speak a different language. He bids us fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell, Luke xii, 5. He solemnly charges us to oppose corrupt nature with the utmost resolution, lest we be cast into hell, where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched, Mark ix, 43. With tenderness he informs us, that whosoever shall say to his brother, Thou fool! shall be in danger of hell fire; that not only the wicked, but the unprofitable servant, shall be cast into outer darkness, where will be weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth; and that he himself, far from conniving at sin, will fix the doom of all impenitent sinners by this dreadful sentence: Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels, Matt. v. 22, xxv, 30, 41.

II. I flatter myself that the doctrine which we are to try by the touchstone of reason, has been already sufficiently established from Scripture. Nevertheless, that the reader may have the fullest view of so momentous a subject, I shall yet present him with a recapitulation of the whole, in the words of our pious reformers, taken out of the Articles, Homilies, and Liturgy of the Church of England.

The ninth article thus describes our depravity and danger: "Original, or birth sin, is the fault and corruption of the nature of every man, that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam;

whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness, and is of his own nature inclined to evil, so that the flesh lusteth always contrary to the Spirit; and therefore, in every person born into this world, it deserveth God's wrath and damnation."

The thirty-fifth article gives sanction to the Homilies in the following words: "The book of Homilies contains a good and wholesome doctrine, and therefore we judge them to be read in churches by ministers, diligently and distinctly, that they may be understood by the people." Let us then see how they set forth the good and wholesome, though lamentable and humbling doctrine of our lost estate.

The title of the second is, "A sermon of the misery of mankind, and of his condemnation to death everlasting by his sin." In the close of it, the contents are summed up in these words: "We have heard how evil we are of ourselves; how of ourselves, and by ourselves, we have no goodness, help, or salvation; but, on the contrary, sin, damnation, and death everlasting."

Our Church is uniform in her woeful accounts of man's misery. Hear her in the first Homily for Whitsunday: "Man *of his own nature*—since the fall—is fleshly and carnal, corrupt and naught, sinful and disobedient to God, without any spark of goodness in him, without any virtuous or godly motion, only given to evil thoughts and wicked deeds."

In the Homily on the nativity she speaks thus: "He—disobedient man—was now cursed and

abhorred; instead of the image of God, he was now become the image of the devil, the bond-slave of hell. Altogether spotted and defiled, he seemed to be nothing else but a lump of sin; and therefore, by the just judgment of God, he was condemned to everlasting death. Thus, in Adam all men became universally mortal, having in themselves nothing but everlasting damnation of body and soul."*

The same doctrine is delivered with the same plainness in the second part of the Homily on the passion: "Adam died the death, that is, became mortal, lost the favor of God, and was cast out of paradise, being no longer a citizen of heaven, but a firebrand of hell, and a bond-slave of the devil." And St. Paul bears witness, that by Adam's offense death came upon all men to condemnation, who became plain reprobates, and castaways, being perpetually damned to the everlasting pains of hell fire.

Agreeably to this, we are taught, in the second part of the Homily on repentance, that "part of

*Prejudiced persons, who, instead of considering the entire system of truth, run away with a part detached from the whole, will be offended here, as if our Church "damned every body." But the candid reader will easily observe, that instead of dooming any one to destruction, she only declares, that the Savior finds all men in a state of condemnation and misery, where they would eternally remain, were it not for the compassionate equity of our gracious God, which does not permit him to sentence to consciousness of eternal torments any one of his creatures, for a sin of which they never were personally guilty; and of which, consequently, they can never have any consciousness.

that virtue consists in an unfeigned acknowledgment of our sins to God, whom, by them, we have so grievously offended, that if he should deal with us according to his justice, we deserve a thousand hells, if there were so many."

The same vein of wholesome, though unpleasant doctrine, runs through the Liturgy of our Church. She opens her service by exhorting us not to dissemble nor cloak our manifold sins and wickedness. She acknowledges in her confessions, that we have erred, and strayed from God's ways, like lost sheep—that there is no health in us—that we are miserable sinners, miserable offenders, to whom our sins are grievous; and the burden of them is intolerable.

She begins her baptismal office by reminding us that all men are conceived and born in sin. She teaches in her catechism that we are by nature born in sin, and the children of wrath. She confesses in the collect before the general thanksgiving, that we are tied and bound with the chain of our sins, and entreats God to let the pitifulness of his great mercy loose us; and in her suffrages she beseeches him to have mercy upon us—to spare us, and make speed to save us—a language that can suit none but condemned sinners.

Duly sensible of our extreme danger, till we have secured an interest in Christ, at the grave she supplicates the most holy God, not to deliver us into the bitter pains of eternal death; and in the Litany she beseeches our Lord Jesus Christ, by his agony and bloody sweat, by his cross and

passion, to deliver us from his wrath and everlasting damnation. Thus is our Church everywhere consistent with herself and with the oracles of God, in representing us as corrupt, condemned creatures in Adam; till we are penitent, absolved believers in Jesus Christ.

The doctrine to be demonstrated in this treatise being thus fully stated, in the consentaneous words of the sacred writers, and our pious reformers, I shall close this part by an appeal to the reader's candor and common sense. If such are the sentiments of our Church, are those churchmen reasonable, who intimate that all the maintainers of them are either her open or secret enemies? and may they rank with modest, humble Christians, who, instead of the self-abasing, Scripture doctrine here laid down, boldly substitute pompous, pharisaic descriptions of the present dignity and rectitude of human nature? Without waiting for the obvious answer, I pass to the first class of arguments, on which the truth of this mortifying doctrine is established.

SECOND PART.

As no man is bound to believe what is contrary to common sense; if the above stated doctrine appear irrational, Scriptures, Articles, Homilies, and Liturgy, are quoted in vain: when men of parts are pressed with their authority, they start from it as an imposition on their rea-

son, and make as honorable a retreat as they possibly can.

Some, to extricate themselves at once, set the Bible aside, as full of incredible assertions. Others, with more modesty, plead that the Scriptures have been frequently misunderstood, and are so in the present case. They put grammar, criticism, and common sense to the rack, to show, that when the inspired writers say the human heart is desperately wicked, they mean that it is extremely good; or at least like blank paper, ready to receive either the characters of virtue or of vice. With respect to the testimony of our reformers, they would have you to understand, that in this enlightened age we must leave their harsh, uncharitable sentiments to the old Puritans, and the present Methodists.

That such objectors may subscribe as a solemn truth, what they have hitherto rejected as a dangerous error, and that humble sinners may see the propriety of a heart-felt repentance, and the absolute need of an almighty Redeemer, they are here presented with some proofs of our depravity, taken from the astonishing severity of God's dispensations toward mankind.

AXIOM.

If we consider the supreme Being as creating a world for the manifestation of his glory, the display of his perfections, and the communication of his happiness to an intelligent creature, whom he would attach to himself by the strongest ties of gratitude and love, we at once per-

ceive that he never could form this earth and man in their present disordered, deplorable condition. It is not so absurd to suppose the meridian sun productive of darkness, as to imagine that infinite goodness ever produced any kind or degree of evil.

Infinite holiness and wisdom having assisted infinite goodness to draw the original plan of the world, it could not but be entirely worthy of its glorious Author, absolutely free from every moral defilement and natural disorder: nor could infinite power possibly be at a loss to execute what the other divine attributes had contrived. Therefore, unless we embrace the senseless opinion of the Materialists, who deny the being of a God, or admit the ridiculous creed of the Manichees, who adore two gods, the one the gracious author of all the good, and the other the mischievous principle of all the evil in the world, we must conclude with Moses, that every thing which God made, was at first very good; or, in other words, that order and beauty, harmony and happiness, were stamped upon every part of the creation, and especially on man, the masterpiece of creating power, in this sublunary world. On this axiom I raise my

FIRST ARGUMENT.

Does not the natural state of the earth cast a light upon the spiritual condition of its inhabitants? Amidst a thousand beauties, that indicate what it was when God pronounced it very good, and, as the original also imports, extremely beau-

tiful; amidst the elegant and grand ruins, which form the variety of our smiling landscapes and romantic prospects; can an impartial inquirer help taking notice of a thousand striking proofs, that a multiplied curse rests upon this globe; and that man, who inhabits it, is now disgraced by the God of nature and providence?

Here, deceitful morasses, or faithless quicksands, obstruct our way: there, miry, impassable roads, or inhospitable, sandy deserts, endanger our life. In one place, we are stopped by stupendous chains of rocky mountains, broken into frightful precipices or hideous caverns: and in another, we meet with ruinous valleys, cut deep by torrents and waterfalls, whose tremendous roar stuns the astonished traveler. Many of the hills are stony, rude, and waste; and most of the plains are covered over with strata of barren sand, stiff clay, or infertile gravel.

Thorns, thistles, and noxious weeds,* grow spontaneously every-where, and yield a troublesome, never-failing crop: while the best soil, carefully plowed by the laborious husbandman, and sown with precious seed, frequently repays his expensive toil with light sheaves, or a blasted harvest.

* Those who oppose the doctrine of the fall, say that "weeds have their use." I grant they are serviceable to thousands of poor people, who earn their bread by pulling the general nuisance out of our fields and gardens; but till our objectors have proved that thistles are more useful, and therefore grow more spontaneously, and multiply more abundantly, than corn, we shall discover the badness of their cause through the slightness of their objection.

Consider that immense part of the globe, which lies between the tropics; it is parched up by the scorching beams of the vertical sun: there, the tawny inhabitants fan themselves in vain: they pant, they melt, they faint on the sultry couch; and, like the birds of night, dare not appear abroad, till evening shades temper the insufferable blaze of day. View the frozen countries around the poles: in summer, the sun just glances upon them by his feeble, horizontal rays: in winter he totally deserts them, and they lie bound with rigorous frosts, and buried in continual night. There, the torpid inhabitants know neither harvest nor vintage; the ocean seems a boundless plain of ice, and the continent immense hills of snow.

The temperate zones are, indeed, blessed with milder climates; but even here, how irregular are the seasons! To go no farther than this favored island, what means the strange foresight, by which the ice of January is laid in to temper the ardors of July; and the burning mineral is stored in June, to mitigate the frost in December? But, notwithstanding these precautions, what continual complaints are heard about the intenseness of the heat, the severity of the cold, or the sudden pernicious change from the one to the other!

Let us descend to particulars. In winter, how often do drifts of snow bury the starved sheep, and entomb the frozen traveler! In summer, how frequently do dreadful storms of hail cut down, or incessant showers of rain wash away,

the fruits of the earth! Perhaps, to complete the desolation, water pours down from all the neighboring hills; and the swelling streams, joining with overflowing rivers, cause sudden inundations, lay waste the richest pastures, and carry off the swimming flocks; while the frighted inhabitants* of the vale either retire to the top of their deluged houses, or, by the timely assistance of boats, fly from the imminent and increasing danger.

If heaven seems to dissolve into water in one place, in another it is like brass; it yields neither fruitful rains nor cooling dews: the earth is like iron under it, and the perishing cattle loll out their parched tongues, where they once drank the refreshing stream. Suppose a few happy districts escape these dreadful scourges for a number of years, are they not at last visited with redoubled severity? And, while abused affluence vanishes as a dream before the intolerable dearth, do not a starving,† riotous populace, leave their wretched cottages, to plunder the houses of their wealthy neighbors, desperately venturing the gallows for a morsel of bread?

When some, secure from the attacks of water, quietly enjoy the comforts of plenty, fire perhaps surprises them in an instant: they awake, involved in smoke, and surrounded by crackling flames, through which—if it is not too late—they fly naked at the hazard of their neck, and think

* This was the case of several families in the author's parish, November, 1770.

† This happened some years ago in this neighborhood.

themselves happy if, while they leave behind them young children or aged parents, burning in the blaze of all their goods, they escape themselves with dislocated joints or broken bones. Their piercing shrieks, and the fall of their house, seem to portend a general conflagration; loud confusion increases, disastrous ruin spreads; and perhaps, before they can be stopped, a street, a suburb, a whole city, is reduced to ashes.

Turn your imagination from the smoking ruins, to fix it upon the terrifying effects of the air, agitated into roaring tempests and boisterous hurricanes; before their impetuous blast the masts of ships and cedars of Lebanon are like broken reeds; men of war and solid buildings like the driven chaff. Here, they strip the groaning forests, tear the bosom of the earth, and obscure the sky with clouds of whirling sand: and there they plow up the liquid foaming plains, and, with sportive fury, turn up mountains for ridges, or cut valleys instead of furrows. As they pass along, the confounded elements dreadfully roar under the mighty scourge, the rolling sea tosses herself up to heaven, and the solid land is swept with the besom of destruction.

To highten the horror of the scene, thunder, the majestic voice of an angry God, and the awful artillery of heaven, bursts into loud claps from the lowering sky. Distant hills reverberate and increase the alarming sound, and, with rocking edifices, declare to man that vengeance belongeth to God. And, to enforce the solemn warning, repeated flashes of lightning, with hor-

rible glare, dazzle his eyes, and with forked fires strike consternation into his breast, if they do not actually strike him dead in the midst of his shattered habitation.

Nor doth heaven alone dart destructive fires; earth—our mother earth—as if it were not enough frequently to corrupt the atmosphere by pestilential vapors, borrows the assistance of the devouring elements, to terrify and scourge her guilty children. By sudden frightful chasms, and the mouth of her burning mountains, she vomits clouds of smoke, sulphureous flames, and calcined rocks; she emits streams of melted minerals, covers the adjacent plains with boiling fiery lavas; and, as if she wanted to ease herself of the burden of her inhabitants, suddenly rises against them, and in battles of shaking, at once crushes, destroys, and buries them in heaps of ruins.

These astonishing scenes, like a bloody battle that is seen at a distance, may indeed entertain us. They may amuse our imagination, when in a peaceful apartment we behold them beautifully represented by the pen of a Virgil, or the pencil of a Raphael. But to be in the midst of them, as thousands are, sooner or later, is inexpressibly dreadful. It is actually to see the forerunner of Divine vengeance, and hear the shaking of God's destructive rod. It is to behold at once a lively emblem and an awful pledge of that fire and brimstone, storm and tempest, which the righteous Governor of the world will rain upon the ungodly; when the heavens shall pass away

with a great noise, the elements shall melt with fervent heat, and the earth, with the works that are therein, shall be burned up.

Now, as reason loudly declares that the God of order, justice, and goodness could never establish and continue this fearful course of things, but to punish the disorders of the moral world by those of the natural, we must conclude that man is guilty, from the alarming tokens of Divine displeasure, which sooner or later are so conspicuous in every part of the habitable globe

SECOND ARGUMENT.

We have taken a view of the residence of mankind: let us now behold them entering upon the disordered scene. And here reason informs us, that some mystery of iniquity lies hid under the loathsome, painful, and frequently mortal circumstances which accompany their birth. For it can never be imagined, that a righteous and good God would suffer innocent and pure creatures to come into the world skilled in no language but that of misery, venting itself in bitter cries or doleful accents.

It is a matter of fact, that infants generally return their first breath with a groan, and salute the light with the voice of sorrow: generally, I say, for sometimes they are born half dead, and can not, without the utmost difficulty, be brought to breathe and groan. But all are born at the hazard of their lives; for while some can not press into the land of the living, without being dangerously bruised, others have their tender

bones dislocated. Some are almost strangled; and it is the horrible fate of others, to be forced into the world by instruments of torture; having their skull bored through or broken to pieces; or their quivering limbs cut or torn off from the unfortunate trunk. Again:

While some appear on the stage of life embarrassed with superfluous parts, others, unaccountably mutilated, want those which are necessary. And what is more terrible still, a few, whose hideous, misshapen bodies seem calculated to represent the deformity of a fallen soul, rank among frightful monsters; and to terminate the horror of the parents, are actually smothered and destroyed.

The spectators, it is true, concerned for the honor of mankind, frequently draw a vail over these shocking and bloody scenes; but a philosopher will find them out, and will rationally infer that the deplorable and dangerous manner in which mankind are born, proves them to be degenerate fallen creatures.*

* Logicians will excuse the author, if he prefers the common, unaffected manner of proposing his arguments, to the formal method of the schools. But they may easily try his enthymemes by giving them the form of syllogisms, thus:

I. Argument. If the rod of God is fearfully shaken over this globe, the disordered habitation of mankind, it is a sign they are under his displeasure.

But God's rod is fearfully shaken over this globe, etc. Therefore, mankind are under his displeasure.

II. Argument. A pure and innocent creature can not be born under such and such deplorable circumstances.

But man is born under such and such deplorable cir-

THIRD ARGUMENT.

If we let our thoughts ascend from the little sufferers, to the mothers that bear them, we shall find another dreadful proof of the Divine displeasure, and of our natural depravity. Does not a good master, much more a gracious God, delight in the prosperity and happiness of his faithful servants? If mankind were naturally in their Creator's favor, would he not order the fruit of the womb to drop from it without any more inconveniency than ripe vegetables fall from the opening husk, or full-grown fruit from the disburdened tree? But how widely different is the case!

Fix your attention on pregnant mothers: see their disquietude and fears. Some go beforehand through an imaginary travail, almost as painful to the mind as the real labor is to the body. The dreaded hour comes at last. Good God! What lingering, what tearing pains: what redoubled throes, what killing agonies attend it! See the curse—or rather see it not. Let the daughter of her who tasted the forbidden fruit without the man, drink that bitter cup without him. Fly from the mournful scene, fly to distant apartments; but in vain, the din of sorrow pursues and overtakes you there.

A child of man is at the point of being born; his tortured mother proclaims the news in the bitterest accents. They increase with her in-

cumstances. Therefore man is not a pure and innocent creature.

creasing agony. Sympathize and pray while she suffers and groans—perhaps while she suffers and dies—for it is possibly her dying groan that reaches your ear. Perhaps nature is spent in the hard travail; her son is born, and, with Jacob's wife, she closes her languid eye and expires. Perhaps the instruments of death are upon her; the keen steel mangles her delicate frame; as Cæsar's mother, she generously suffers her body to be opened, that her unborn child may not be torn from her in pieces; and the fertile tree is unnaturally cut down, that its fruit may be safely gathered.

Perhaps neither mother nor child can be saved, and one grave is going to deprive a distracted mortal of a beloved Rachel, and a long-expected Benjamin. If this is the case, O earth, earth, earth, conceal these slain, cover their blood, and detain in thy dark bosom the fearful curse that brought them there. Vain wish! Too active to be confined in thy deepest vaults, it ranges through the world; with unrelenting fierceness it pursues trembling mothers, and forces them to lift up their voice for speedy relief; though varied according to the accents of a hundred languages, it is the same voice—that of the bitterest anguish; and while it is reverberated from hamlet to hamlet, from city to city, it strikes the unprejudiced inquirer, and makes him confess, that these clouds of unbribed witnesses, by their loud, consentaneous evidence, impeach *Sin*, the tormentor of the woman, and murderer of her offspring.

But suppose the case is not so fatal, and she is at last delivered; her labor may be over, yet not her pain and danger; a lingering weakness may carry her slowly to her grave. If she recovers, she may be a mother, and yet unable to act a mother's part. Her pining child sucks her disordered breast in vain; either the springs of his balmy food are dried up, or they overflow with a putrid loathsome fluid, and excruciating ulcers cause the soft lips of the infant to appear terrible as the edge of the sword.

If she happily escapes this common kind of distress, yet she may date the beginning of some chronical disease from her dangerous lying-in; and in consequence of her hard wrestling for the blessing of a child, may, with the patriarch, go halting all her days. How sensible are the marks of Divine indignation in all these scenes of sorrow! and consequently, how visible our sinfulness and guilt!

Nor can the justness of the inference be denied, under pretense that the females of other animals, which neither do nor can sin, bring forth their young with pain, as well as women. For, if we take a view of the whole earth, we shall not see any females, except the daughters of Eve, who groan under a periodical disorder that entails languor and pain, weakness and mortal diseases, on their most blooming days. Nor do we in general find any that are delivered of their offspring with half the sorrow and danger of women. These two remarkable circumstances loudly call upon us to look for the cause of the

sorrow which attends the delivery of female animals, where that sorrow is most sensibly felt; and to admire the perfect agreement that subsists between the observations of natural philosophers, and the assertion of the most ancient historian, Gen. iii, 16.

FOURTH ARGUMENT.

If we advert to mankind, even before they burst the womb of their tortured mothers, they afford us a new proof of their total degeneracy. For reason dictates, that if they were not conceived in sin, the Father of mercies could not, consistently with his goodness and justice, command the cold hand of death to nip them in the unopened or just opened bud. This, nevertheless, happens every hour. Who can number the early miscarriages of the womb? How many millions of miserable embryos feel the pangs of death before those of birth, and preposterously turn the fruitful womb into a living grave? And how many millions more of wretched infants escape the dangers of their birthday, and salute the troublesome light, only to take their untimely leave of it, after languishing a few days on the rack of a convulsive or torturing disorder? I ask again, would a good and righteous God seal the death-warrant of such multitudes of his unborn or newly-born creatures, if their natural depravity did not render them proper subjects of dissolution?

It is true, the young beasts suffer and die, as well as infants; but it is only because they are

involved in our misery. They partake of it, as the attendants of a noble traitor share in his deserved ruin. Sin, that inconceivably-virulent and powerful evil, drew down God's righteous curse upon all that was created for man's use, as well as upon man himself. Hence only springs the degeneracy and death that turn beasts to one promiscuous dust with mankind. Compare Gen. iii, 17; Rom. v, 12, viii, 22. We may then justly infer from the sufferings and death of still-born or new-born children, that man is totally degenerate, and liable to destruction even from his mother's womb.

FIFTH ARGUMENT.

But take your leave of the infant corpse, already buried in the womb, or deposited in a coffin of a span long; fix your attention on the healthy, sucking child. See him stupidly staring in his nurse's lap, or awkwardly passing through childhood to manhood. How visible is his degeneracy in every stage!

Part of the Divine image, in which he was made in Adam, consisted in purity, power, and knowledge; but now, he is naturally the least cleanly, as well as the most helpless and ignorant of all animals. Yes, if the reader could forgive the indelicacy of the assertion, for the sake of its truth, I would venture to show, that there is no comparison between the cleanliness of the little active animals, which suck the filthy swine, and of helpless infants, who suck the purer breasts of their tender mothers. But,

casting a vail over the dribbling loathsome little creatures, without fear of being contradicted, I aver that the young of those brutes, which are stupid to a proverb, know their dams, and follow them as soon as they are dropped; while infants are months without taking any particular notice of their parents, and without being able, I shall not say to follow them, but even to bear the weight of their swaddled body, or stand upon their tottering legs.

With reference to the knowledge necessary for the support of animal life, it is undeniable that brutes have greatly the advantage of mankind. Fowls and fishes, immediately, and with amazing sagacity, single out their proper nourishment, among a thousand useless and noxious things; but infants put indifferently to their mouths all that comes to their hand, whether it be food or poison, a coral or a knife; and what is more astonishing still, grown-up persons scarce ever attain to the knowledge of the quantity or quality of the meat and drink which are most suitable to their constitutions.

All disordered dogs fix at once upon the salutary vegetable that can—in some cases—relieve their distress; but many physicians, even after several years' study and practice, hurt, and sometimes kill their patients, by improper medicines. Birds of passage, by mere instinct, find the north and south more readily than mariners by the compass. Untaught spiders weave their webs, and uninstructed bees make their combs to the greatest perfection; but fallen man must serve

a tedious apprenticeship to learn his own business; and with all the help of masters, tools, and patterns, seldom proves an ingenious artist.

Again: other animals are provided with a natural covering, that answers the double end of usefulness and ornament; but indigent man is obliged to borrow from plants, beasts, and worms, the materials with which he hides his nakedness, or defends his feebleness; and a great part of his short life is spent in providing, or putting on and off garments, the gaudy tokens of his shame, or ragged badges of his fall.

Are not these plain proofs that man, who, according to his superior rank and primitive excellency, should in all things have the pre-eminence, is now a degraded being, cursed for his apostasy with native uncleanliness, helplessness, ignorance, and nakedness, above all other animals?

SIXTH ARGUMENT.

Man's natural ignorance, great as it is, might, nevertheless, be overlooked, if he had but the right knowledge of his Creator. But, alas! the holy and righteous God judiciously withdraws himself from his unholy, apostate creature. Man is not properly acquainted with him in whom he lives, and moves, and hath his being. This humbling truth may be demonstrated by the following observations:

God is infinitely perfect; all the perfection which is found in the most exalted creatures, is but the reflection of the transcendent effulgence

belonging to that glorious Sun of spiritual beauty; it is but the surface of the unfathomable depths of goodness and loveliness, which regenerate souls discover in that boundless ocean of all excellence. If, therefore, men saw God, they could far less help being struck with holy awe, overwhelmed with pleasing wonder, and ravished with delightful admiration, than a man born blind, and restored to sight in the blaze of a summer's day, could help being transported at the glory of the new and unexpected scene. Could we but see virtue in all her beauty, said a heathen, she would ravish our hearts.* How much greater would our ravishments be, if we were indulged with a clear, immediate discovery of the divine beauty—the eternal origin of all virtue—the exuberant fountain of all perfection and delight? But, alas! how few thus behold, know, and admire God, may easily be seen by the impious or vain conduct of mankind.

If a multitude of men ingenuously confess they know not the king; if they take his statue or one of his attendants for him; or if they doubt whether there be a king, or sport with his name and laws in his presence, we reasonably conclude that they neither see nor know the royal person. And is not this the case of the superstitious, who, like the Athenians, worship an unknown God? Of idolaters, who bow to favorite mortals, or lifeless images, as to the true God? Of infidels, who doubt the very being of

* Si virtus conspiceretur oculis, mirabiles amores excitaret sui.—*Cic.*

a God? And of open sinners, the bulk of mankind, who live every-where as if there was none?

Our natural ignorance of God manifests itself still more evidently by the confessions both of real and nominal Christians. The former, before they knew God, and were admitted to behold his glory shining in the face of Jesus Christ, bitterly complained as Isaiah, Verily thou art a God that hidest thyself; or mournfully asked with David, How long wilt thou hide thy face from me? It is plain, then, that by nature they were as others, without God (practical Atheists) in the world, and have as much reason as St. Paul to declare that the world by wisdom knew not God.

As for nominal Christians, though they daily pray that the fellowship of the Holy Ghost may be with us all, it is evident they are utter strangers to communion with God by his Holy Spirit. For if we affirm that he blesses his children with a spiritual discovery of his presence, and manifests himself to them as he doth not to the world, they say we are mad, or call us enthusiasts. This behavior shows, beyond all confessions, that they are totally unacquainted with the light of God's countenance; for what greater proof can a blind man give, that he has no knowledge of the sun, than to suspect his neighbor of lunacy for affirming that sunshine is a delightful reality?

From this moral demonstration of our natural ignorance of God, I draw the following conclusion: If the Lord, who is a mild and condescending King to all his loyal subjects, a Father full of endearing and tender love to all his duti-

ful children, hides his face from mankind in a natural state, and if what little they know of him is only by conjecture, hearsay, or inference,* it is a proof that they are under his displeasure; and, consequently, that they are rebellious, fallen creatures.

For, what but rebellion could thus separate between beings so nearly related as an infinitely-gracious Creator and favorite creatures, whose soul is, according to a heathen, *divinæ particula auræ*, and, according to Moses, the very breath of God? We may then rationally conclude with the evangelical prophet, that our iniquities have separated between us and our God, and that our sins have hid his face from us, eclipsed the Sun of righteousness, and brought such darkness on our souls, that by nature we know neither what we are, nor what we should be: neither whence we come, nor whither we are going: neither the grand business we have to do, nor the danger that attends our leaving it undone.

SEVENTH ARGUMENT.

If by nature mankind know not the Lord to be their God, is it surprising that beasts should not know mankind to be their lords? Nevertheless, reason agrees with Scripture in maintaining that man, by far the noblest work of God here below, should, according to the reason and

* This is the knowledge of God mentioned Rom. i, 21. It is sufficient to leave without excuse those who do not improve it, till they attain to the saving knowledge mentioned John xvii, 3; 1 John v, 20.

fitness of things, bear rule over all the sublunary creation. But, alas! even in this respect, how is the crown fallen from his head! Inferior animals have as little regard for him as he has for his God.

Notwithstanding his artful contrivances, greedy birds and mischievous beasts eat up, trample down, or destroy part of the fruit of his rural labor. In warmer climes, armies of locusts, more terrible than hosts of men, frequently darken the air, or cover the ground, and equally mock at human power and craft. Wherever they light, all verdure disappears, and the summer's fruitfulness is turned into wintry desolation.

If locusts do not reach this happy island, caterpillars, and a variety of other seemingly-insignificant, but really-formidable insects, make a more constant, though less general, attack upon our trees and gardens. In vain are they destroyed by millions—they can not be fully conquered; and the yearly returning plague forces the considerate spectator to acknowledge the finger of a sin-avenging Providence.

Happy would it be for man if rebellious animals were satisfied with the produce of his fields and orchards; but, alas! they thirst after his blood, and attack his person. Lions, tigers, rattlesnakes, crocodiles, and sharks, whenever they have an opportunity, impetuously attack, furiously tear, and greedily devour him. And what is more astonishing, the basest reptiles are not afraid to breed in his stomach, to live in his very bowels, and to consume his inward parts;

while swarms of flying, leaping, or creeping insects, too vile to be named—but not to humble a proud apostate—have the insolence to fix upon his skin, and, by piercing or furrowing his flesh, suck his blood, and feast upon him from his cradle to his grave.

Domestic animals, it is true, do man excellent service; but is it not because he either forces or bribes them to it, by continual labor and expense, with which he breaks and maintains them? What business have multitudes of men, but to serve the drudges of mankind? What are smiths, farriers, farmers, servants, grooms, hostlers, etc., but the slaves of brutes—washing, currying, shoeing, feeding, and waiting upon them both by day and by night?

And yet, notwithstanding the prerogative granted to Noah's piety, Gen. ix, 2, and the care taken of domestic animals, do they not rebel as often as they dare? Here sheep, deemed the quietest of all, run astray, or break into the fields of a litigious neighbor: there, the furious bull pursues and gores, or the raging dog sets upon the inoffensive traveler. To-day you read that an impetuous, foaming steed, hath hurried away, thrown off, and dragged along his unfortunate master, whose blood, sprinkling the dust, and brains dashed upon the stones, direct the search of his disconsolate friend: and to-morrow, you may hear that a vicious horse has darted his iron-fenced hoof into his attendant's breast or forehead, and has lamed or killed him on the spot.

And would the wise Governor of the world,

the kind protector of his obedient creatures, permit this rebellion, even of the tamest animals and basest vermin, against man, if man himself was not a daring rebel against him?

EIGHTH ARGUMENT.

That a contemptible insect should dare to set upon, and be able to devour a proud monarch, a Herod in the midst of his guards, is terrible: but the mischief stops not here. Numerous tribes of other base animals are armed with poisonous tongues or stings, and use them against mankind with peculiar rage. To say nothing of mad dogs, have not asps, vipers,* tarantulas, scorpions, and other venomous serpents and insects, the destructive skill of extracting the quintessence of the curse which sin, our moral poison, hath brought upon the earth? When we come within their reach, do they not bite or sting us with the utmost fury? and, by infusing their subtile venom in our blood, spread they not anguish and destruction through our agonizing frame? Answer, ye thousands, who died in the wilderness of the bite of fiery serpents; and ye multitudes, who, in almost all countries, have shared their deplorable fate.

Let us descend to the vegetable world. How many deceitful roots, plants, and fruits, deposit their pernicious juices in the stomach of those who unwarily feed upon them? Did not Elisha

* Some will say that viper's flesh is useful in physic. I grant it, but is the poison of that creature useful? This must be proved before the argument can be invalidated.

and the sons of the prophets narrowly escape being poisoned altogether, by one of them fatally mistaking a pot-herb? And do not many go quickly or slowly to their grave by such melancholy accidents?

Minerals and metals are not the last to enter into the general conspiracy against mankind. Under inoffensive appearances, do they not contain what is destructive to the animal frame? And have not many fallen a sacrifice to their ignorance of the mischief lurking in arsenic, and other mineral productions?* Nor are metallic effluvia less hurtful to hundreds; and the health of mankind is, perhaps, more injured by copper alone, than it is preserved by all the mineral waters in the world. It is acknowledged that numbers are poisoned by food prepared in utensils made of that dangerous metal; and how many are insensibly hurt by the same means, is only known to a wise and righteous Providence.

Thus, God leaves us in the world, where mischief lurks under a variety of things apparently useful, without giving us the least intimation of destruction near. To say that infinite goodness can deal thus with innocent creatures, is offering violence to our reason, and an affront to Divine justice. Conclude, then, with me, reader, that

* It is objected that excellent remedies are prepared with antimony and mercury. But it is well known that the persons who use them only expel one poison with another; as the decayed constitutions of those who have frequent recourse to such violent medicines abundantly prove.

we have lost our original innocence, and forfeited our Creator's favor.

NINTH ARGUMENT.

But if the generality of mankind escape all the various sorts of poison, do they escape the curse of toil and sweat? And is not a great majority of them reduced to such sordid want, and pressing necessity, as to be obliged to do the greatest drudgery for a wretched maintenance?

When God made them to have dominion over the works of his hands—when he put all things in subjection under their feet, and crowned them with glory and honor, they filled up each happy hour in evidencing their love to him and to each other; they spent their golden moments in admiring the variety and beauty of his works, finding out the divine signature impressed upon them, swaying their mild scepter over the obedient creation, and enjoying the rich, incorruptible fruits, which the earth spontaneously produced in the greatest perfection and abundance. Thus their pleasure was without idleness or pain, and their employment without toil or weariness.

But no sooner did disobedience open the floodgates of natural evil, than arduous labor came in full tide upon mankind; and a thousand painful arts were invented to mitigate the manifold curses which sin had brought upon them.

Since the fall, our bodies are become vulnerable and shamefully naked: and it is the business of thousands to make, or sell, all sorts of garments for our defense and ornament. The earth

has lost her original fertility; and thousands more with iron instruments open her bosom to force her to yield us a maintenance; or with immense labor secure her precarious, decaying fruits. Immoderate rains deprive her of her solidity, and earthquakes or deluges destroy her evenness; numbers, therefore, are painfully employed in making or mending roads. Each country affords some only of the necessaries or conveniences of life; this obliges the mercantile inhabitants to transport, with immense trouble and danger, the produce of one place to supply the wants of another. We are exposed to a variety of dangers; our persons and property must be secured against the inclemency of the weather, the attacks of evil beasts, and assaults of wicked men; hence the fatigue of millions of workmen in wood and stone, metals and minerals; and the toils and hazards of millions more who live by making, wearing, or using the various instruments of war and slaughter.

Disorder and injustice give rise to government, politics, and a labyrinth of laws; and those employ myriads of officers, lawyers, magistrates, and rulers. We are subject to a thousand pains and maladies; hence myriads more prescribe and prepare remedies, or attend and nurse the sick. Our universal ignorance occasions the tedious labor of giving and receiving instruction in all the branches of human and Divine knowledge. And to complete the whole, the original tongue of mankind is confounded, and even neighboring nations are barbarians to each

other; from hence arise the painful lucubrations of critics and linguists, with the infinite trouble of teaching and learning various languages.

The curse introduced by sin is the occasion of all these toils. They are soon mentioned; but, alas! how long, how grievous do they appear to those that feel their severity? How many sighs have they forced from the breasts, how much sweat from the bodies of mankind? Unite the former, a tempest might ensue; collect the latter, it would swell into rivers.

To go no farther than this populous parish, with what hardships and dangers do our indigent neighbors earn their bread! See those who ransack the bowels of the earth to get the black mineral we burn; how little is their lot preferable to that of the Spanish felons who work the golden mines?

They take their leave of the light of the sun, and, suspended by a rope, are let down many fathoms perpendicularly toward the center of the globe; they traverse the rocks through which they have dug their horizontal ways; the murderer's cell is a palace in comparison of the black spot to which they repair; the vagrant's posture in the stocks is preferable to that in which they labor.

Form, if you can, an idea of the misery of men kneeling, stooping, or lying on one side, to toil all day in a confined place, where a child could hardly stand; while a younger company, with their hands and feet on the black, dusty ground, and a chain about their body, creep and

drag along, like four-footed beasts, heavy loads of the dirty mineral, through ways almost impassable to the curious observer.

In these low and dreary vaults all the elements seem combined against them. Destructive damps, and clouds of noxious dust infect the air they breathe. Sometimes water incessantly distills on their naked bodies; or bursting upon them in streams, drowns them and deluges their work. At other times, pieces of detached rocks crush them to death, or the earth, breaking in upon them, buries them alive. And frequently sulphureous vapors, kindled in an instant by the light of their candles, form subterraneous thunder and lightning. What a dreadful phenomenon! how impetuous is the blast! how fierce the rolling flames! how intolerable the noisome smell! how dreadful the continued roar! how violent and fatal the explosion!

Wonderful Providence! some of the unhappy men have time to prostrate themselves—the fiery scourge grazes their backs, the ground shields their breasts; they escape. See them wound up out of the blazing dungeon, and say if these are not brands plucked out of the fire. A pestiferous steam, and clouds of suffocating smoke pursue them. Half dead themselves, they hold their dead or dying companions in their trembling arms. Merciful God of Shadrach! Kind Protector of Meshech! Mighty Deliverer of Abednego! Patient Preserver of rebellious Jonah! Will not these utter a song—a song of praise to thee—praise, ardent as the flames they escape—

lasting as the life thou prolongest!—alas! they refuse! and some—O, tell it not among the heathens, lest they forever abhor the name of Christian—some return to the very pits, where they have been branded with sulphureous fire by the warning hand of Providence; and there, sporting themselves again with the most infernal wishes, call aloud for a fire that can not be quenched, and challenge the Almighty to cast them into hell, that bottomless pit whence there is no return.

Leave these black men at their perilous work, and see yonder bargemen hauling that loaded vessel against wind and stream. Since the dawn of the day, they have wrestled with the impetuous current; and now that it almost overpowers them, how do they exert all their remaining strength, and strain their every nerve! how are they bathed in sweat and rain! Fastened to their lines as horses to their traces, wherein do they differ from the laborious brutes? Not in an erect posture of body, for in the intenseness of their toil they bend forward, their head is foremost, and their hands upon the ground. If there is any difference, it consists in this: horses are indulged with a collar to save their breasts; and these, as if theirs were not worth saving, draw without one; the beasts tug in patience, silence, and mutual harmony; but the men with loud contention and horrible imprecations. O, sin, what hast thou done! is it not enough that these drudges should toil like brutes; must they also curse one another like devils?

If you have gone beyond the hearing of their impious oaths, stop to consider the sons of Vulcan confined to these forges and furnaces. Is their lot much preferable? a sultry air, and clouds of smoke and dust, are the element in which they labor. The confused noise of water falling, steam hissing, fire-engines working, wheels turning, fires creaking, hammers beating, ore bursting, and bellows roaring, form the dismal concert that strikes the ears, while a continual eruption of flames, ascending from the mouth of their artificial volcanoes, dazzle their eyes with a horrible glare. Massy bars of hot iron are the heavy tools they handle, cylinders of the first magnitude the enormous weights they heave, vessels full of melted metal the dangerous loads they carry, streams of the same burning fluid the fiery rivers which they conduct into the deep cavities of their subterraneous molds; and millions of flying sparks, with a thousand drops of liquid hissing iron, the horrible showers to which they are exposed. See them cast; you would think them in a bath, and not in a furnace; they bedew the burning sand with their streaming sweat; nor are their wet garments dried up, either by the fierce fires that they attend, or the fiery streams which they manage. Certainly, of all men, these have reason to remember the just sentence of an offended God: In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat thy bread all the days of thy life.

All, indeed, do not go through the same toil; but all have their share of it, either in body or in

mind. Behold the studious son of learning; his intense application hath wasted his flesh, exhausted his spirits, and almost dried up his radical moisture. Consider the man of fortune; can his thousands a year exempt him from the curse of Adam? No: he toils perhaps harder in his sports and debaucheries, than the poor plowman that works his estate.

View that corpulent epicure, who idles away the whole day between the festal board and the dozing couch. You may think that he, at least, is free from the curse which I describe: but you are mistaken; while he is living, as he thinks, a life of luxurious ease and gentle inactivity, he fills himself with crude humors, and makes way for the gnawing gout and racking gravel. See even now, how strongly he perspires, and with what uneasiness he draws his short breath, and wipes his dewy, shining face! Surely he toils under the load of an indigested meal. A porter carries a burden upon his brawny shoulders, but this wretch has conveyed one into his sick stomach. He will not work; let him alone; and erelong acute pains will bathe him in as profuse a sweat as that of the furnace man; and strong medicines will exercise him to such a degree, that he will envy even the collier's lot.

It is evident, therefore, that mankind are under a curse of toil and sweat, according to the Divine sentence recorded by Moses;* and that

* It has been asserted that the short pleasure of eating and drinking makes amends for the severest toil. The best way to bring such idle, sensual objectors to reason,

they are frequently condemned by Providence to as hard labor for life, as wretched felons rowing in the galleys, or digging in the mines.* But, as it is absolutely incredible, that a good God, who by a word can supply the wants of all his creatures, should have sentenced innocent mankind to these inconceivable hardships, to procure or enjoy the necessaries of life, it is evident they are guilty, miserable offenders.

TENTH ARGUMENT.

Hard labor and sweat make up but one of the innumerable calamities incident to the wretched inhabitants of this world. Turn your eyes which way you please, and you will see some flying from, others groaning under, the rod of God; and the greatest number busily making a scourge for the backs of their fellow-creatures, or their own.

To pass over the misery of the brute creation; to say nothing of the subtility and rapaciousness with which—after the example of men†—they

would be to make them earn every meal by two or three hours' threshing. Besides, what great pleasure can those have in eating, who actually starve, or just stay gnawing hunger by food coarser than that which their rich neighbors give to their dogs?

* God's image disinherited of day,
Here plunged in mines forgets a sun was made,
There, beings deathless as their haughty lord,
Are hammer'd to the galling oar for life,
And plow the winter's wave, and reap despair.
YOUNG.

† Eager ambition's fiery chase I see;
I see the circling hunt of noisy men,
Burst law's inclosure, leap the mounds of right,

long wait for, and prey upon one another; to cast a vail over the agonies of millions, that are daily stabbed, strangled, shot, and even flayed, boiled, or swallowed up alive, for the support of man's life, or the indulgence of his luxury; and not to mention again the almost uninterrupted cries of feeble infancy; only take notice of the tedious confinement of childhood, the blasted schemes of youth, the anxious cares of riper years, and the deep groans of wrinkled, decrepit, tottering old age. Fix your attention upon family trials; here a prodigal father ruins his children, or undutiful children break the hearts of their fond parents; there an unkind husband imbitters the life of his wife, or an imprudent wife stains the honor of her husband; a servant disobeys, a relation misbehaves, a son lies ill, a tenant breaks, a neighbor provokes, a rival supplants, a friend betrays, or an enemy triumphs; peace seldom continues one day.

Listen to the sighs of the afflicted, the moans of the disconsolate, the complaints of the oppressed, and shrieks of the tortured; consider the deformity of the faces of some, and distortion or mutilation of the limbs of others; to awaken your compassion,* here a beggar holds

Pursuing and pursued, each other's prey;
As wolves, for rapine; as the fox, for wiles;
Till Death, that mighty hunter, earths them all.
YOUNG.

* Some for hard masters broken under arms,
In battle lopp'd away, with half their limbs,
Beg bitter bread through realms their valor saved.
YOUNG.

out the stump of a thigh or an arm; there a ragged wretch hops after you, upon one leg and two crutches; and a little farther you meet with a poor creature, using his hands instead of feet, and dragging through the mire the cumbrous weight of a body without lower parts.

Imagine, if possible, the hardships of those who are destitute of one of their senses; here, the blind is guided by a dog, or gropes for his way in the blaze of noon; there, the deaf lies on the brink of danger, inattentive to the loudest calls; here, sits the dumb, sentenced to eternal silence; there, dribbles the idiot, doomed to perpetual childhood; and yonder, the paralytic shakes without intermission, or lies senseless, the frightful image of a lifeless corpse.

Leaving these wretched creatures, consider the tears of the disappointed—the sorrows of the captive—the anxieties of the accused—the fears of the guilty, and terrors of the condemned. Take a turn through jails, inquisitions, houses of correction, and places of execution. Proceed to the mournful rooms of the languishing, and wearisome beds of the sick; and let not the fear of seeing human woe, in some of its most deplorable appearances, prevent you from visiting hospitals, infirmaries, and bedlams:

A place
Before your eyes appears, sad, noisome, dark,
A lazar-house it seems, wherein are laid
Numbers of all diseased: all maladies
Of ghastly spasm, or racking torture, qualms
Of heart-sick agony, all fev'rous kinds,
Convulsions, epilepsies, fierce catarrhs,

Intestine stone, and ulcer, colic-pangs,
Demoniac frenzy, moping melancholy,
And moon-struck madness, pining atrophy,
Marasmus and wide-wasting pestilence,
Dropsies, and asthmas, and joint-racking rheums.
Dire is the tossing! Deep the groans! Despair
Attends the sick, busiest from couch to couch;
And over them, triumphant Death his dart
Shakes; but delays to strike, though oft invoked
With vows, as their chief good and final hope. MILTON.

To close the horrible prospect, view the ruins of cities and kingdoms—the calamities of wrecks and sieges—the horrors of sea-fights and fields of battle, with all the crimes, devastation, and cruelties, that accompany revenge, contention, and war, and you will be obliged to conclude, with Job, that corrupt man is born to trouble, as the sparks fly upward; with David, that the earth is full of darkness and cruel habitations; and with every impartial inquirer, that our depravity and God's justice concur to make this world a vale of tears, as well as a field of toil and sweat; a vast prison for rebels already "tied with the chains of their sins," a boundless scaffold for their execution, a golgotha, an aceldama, an immense field of torture and blood.

Some will probably say, "This picture of the world is drawn with black lines, but kinder Providence blends light and shade together, and tempers our calamities with numberless blessings." I answer—it can not be too thankfully acknowledged, that while patience suspends the stroke of justice, God, for Christ's sake, restores us a thousand forfeited blessings, that his goodness

may lead us to repentance. But, alas! what is the consequence, where Divine grace does not prove victorious over corrupt nature? To all our sins, do we not add the crime of either enjoying the favors of Providence with the greatest ingratitude, or of abusing them with the most provoking insolence?

Our actions are far more expressive of our real sentiments than our words. Why this variety of exquisite food? says the voluptuary whose life loudly speaks what his lips dare not utter. Why this abundance of delicious wines, but to tempt my unbridled appetite, and please my luxurious palate? Would God have given softness to silks, brightness to colors, and luster to diamonds? says the self-applauding smile of a foolish virgin who worships herself in a glass; would he have commanded the white of the lily thus to meet the blush of the rose, and highten so elegant a proportion of features, if he had not designed that the united powers of art, dress, and beauty, should make me share his divine honors? Why are we blessed with our dear children and amiable friends, says the ridiculous behavior of fond parents and raptured lovers, but that we should suspend our happiness on their ravishing smiles, and place them as favorite idols in the shrine of our hearts? And why has Heaven favored me both with a strong constitution and an affluent fortune, says the rich slave of brutish lusts, but I may drink deeper of earthly joys and sensual delights?

Thus blessings, abused or unimproved, be-

come curses in our hands. God's indulgence encourges us to offend him; we have the fatal skill of extracting poison from the sweetest flowers; and madly turn the gifts of Providence into weapons to attack our Benefactor, and destroy ourselves. That there are, then, such perverted gifts, does not prove that mankind are innocent, but that God's patience endureth yet daily, and that a Savior ever liveth to make intercession for us.

Should it be farther objected, that "our pleasures counterbalance calamities," I answer, the greatest part of mankind are so oppressed with want and cares, toil and sickness, that their intervals of ease may rather be termed "an alleviation of misery," than an "enjoyment of happiness." Our pains are real and lasting—our joys imaginary and momentary. Could we exercise all our senses upon the most pleasing objects, the toothache would render all insipid and burdensome; a fit of the gout alone damps every worldly joy, while all earthly delights together can not give us ease under it—so vastly superior is the bitterness of one bodily pain to the sweetness of all the pleasures of sense!

If objectors will urge that "sufferings are needful for our trial," I reply, they are necessary for our punishment and correction, but not for our trial. A good king can try the loyalty of his subjects without putting them to the rack. Let Nero and Bonner try the innocent by all sorts of tortures, but let not their barbarity be charged upon God strictly just and infinitely good.

However, "calamities prove a blessing to some." And so does transportation. But who ever inferred from thence, that reformed felons were transported for the trial of their virtue, and not for the punishment of their crimes? I conclude, therefore, that our calamities and miseries demonstrate our corruption as strongly as the punishment of the bastinado and pillory, appointed by an equitable judge, prove the guilt of those on whom they are frequently and severely inflicted.

ELEVENTH ARGUMENT.

Would to God the multiplied calamities of life were a sufficient punishment for our desperate wickedness! But, alas! they only make way for the pangs of death. Like traitors, or rather like wolves and vipers, to which the Son of God compares natural men, we are all devoted to destruction. Yes, as we kill those mischievous creatures, so God destroys the sinful sons of men.

If the reader is offended, and denies the mortifying assertion, let him visit with me the mournful spot where thousands are daily executed, and where hundreds make this moment their dying speech. I do not mean what some call "the bed of honor"—a field of battle—but a common death-bed.

Observing, as we go along, those black trophies of the king of terrors, those escutcheons, which preposterous vanity fixes up in honor of the deceased, when kind charity should hang

them out as a warning to the living, let us repair to those mournful apartments where weeping attendants support the dying, where swooning friends embrace the dead, or whence distracted relatives carry out the pale remains of all their joy.

Guided by their groans and funeral lights, let us proceed to the dreary charnel-houses and calvaries, which we decently call vaults and churchyards; and, without stopping to look at the monuments of some, whom my objector remembers as vigorous as himself, and of others, who were, perhaps, his partners in nightly revels, let us hasten to see the dust of his moldered ancestors, and to read upon yonder coffins the dear name of a parent, a child, perhaps a wife, turned off from his bosom into the gulf of eternity!

If this sight does not convince him, I shall open one of the noisome repositories, and show him the deep hollows of those eyes that darted tender sensation into his soul, and odious reptiles fattened upon the once charming, now ghastly, face he doated upon! But methinks he turns pale at the very proposal, and, rather than be confronted with such witnesses, acknowledges that he is condemned to die, with all his dear relatives, and the whole human race.

And is this the case? Are we, then, under sentence of death? How awful is the consideration! Of all the things that nature dreads, is not death the most terrible? And is it not—as being the greatest of temporal evils—ap-

pointed by human and divine laws for the punishment of capital offenders, whether they are named felons and traitors, or more genteelly called men and sinners? Let matter of fact decide.

While earthly judges condemn murderers and traitors to be hanged or beheaded, does not the Judge of all sentence sinful mankind either to pine away with old age, or be wasted with consumptions, burned with fevers, scalded with hot humors, eaten up with cancers, putrefied by mortifications, suffocated by asthmas, strangled by quinseys, poisoned by the cup of excess, stabbed with the knife of luxury, or racked to death by disorders as loathsome, and accidents as various, as their sins?

If you consider the circumstances of their execution, where is the material difference between the malefactor and the sinner? The jailer and the turnkey confine the one to his cell; the disorder and the physician confine the other to his bed. The one lives upon bread and water; the other upon draughts and boluses. The one can walk with his fetters; the other, loaded with blisters, can scarcely turn himself. The one enjoys freedom from pain, and has the perfect use of his senses; the other complains he is racked all over, and is frequently delirious. The executioner does his office upon the one in a few minutes; but the physician and his medicines make the other linger for days, before he can die out of his misery. An honest sheriff, and constables armed with staves, wait upon

one; while a greedy undertaker and his party, with like emblems of authority, accompany the other: and if it is any advantage to have a numerous attendance, without comparison the felon has the greater train.

When the pangs of death are over, does not the difference made between the corpses consist more in appearance than reality? The murderer is dissected in the surgeon's hall, gratis; and the rich sinner is emboweled in his own apartment at great expense.

The robber, exposed to open air, wastes away in hoops of iron; and the gentleman, confined to a damp vault, molders away in sheets of lead: and while the fowls of the air greedily prey upon the one, the vermin of the earth eagerly devour the other.

And if you consider them as launching into the world of spirits, is not the advantage, in one respect, on the malefactor's side? He is solemnly assured he must die; and when the death-warrant comes down, all about him bid him prepare, and make the best of his short time: but the physician and chaplain, friends and attendants, generally flatter the honorable sinner to the last. And what is the consequence? He either sleeps on in carnal security, till death puts an end to all his delusive dreams, or, if he has some notion that he must repent, for fear of discomposing his spirits, he still puts it off till to-morrow; and, in the midst of his delays, God says, Thou fool, *this night* thy soul shall be required of thee. What wonder is it then, if, when the

converted thief goes from the ignominious tree to paradise, the impenitent rich man passes from his purple bed into an awful eternity, and there lifts up his eyes in unexpected torments?

If these are truths too obvious to be denied, wilt thou, sinner, as the thoughtless vulgar, blunt their edge by saying, with amazing unconcern, "Death is a debt we must all pay to nature?" Alas! this is granting the point; for if all have contracted so dreadful a debt, all are in a corrupt and lost estate. Nor is this debt to be paid to nature, but to justice; otherwise, dying would be as easy as sleeping, or any other natural action: but it is beyond expression terrible to thee, from whose soul the Redeemer has not extracted sin, the monster's sting; and if thou dost not see it now, in the most alarming light, it is because thou either imaginest it at a great distance, or the double vail of rash presumption, and brutish stupidity, is yet upon thy hardened heart.

Or wilt thou, as the poor heathens, comfort thyself with the cruel thought, that "thou shalt not die alone?" Alas! dying companions may increase, but can not take off the horror of dissolution. Besides, though we live in a crowd, we generally die alone: each must drink that bitter cup, as if he were the only mortal in the universe.

What must we do, then, in such deplorable circumstances? What, but humble ourselves in the dust, and bow low to the scepter of Divine justice; confessing that, since the righteous

God has condemned us to certain death, and, in general, to a far more lingering and painful death than murderers and traitors are made to undergo, we are certainly degenerate creatures and capital offenders, who stand in absolute need of an almighty Redeemer.

Permit me now, candid reader, to make a solemn appeal to thy reason, assisted by the fear of God. From all that has been advanced, does it not appear that man is no more the favored, happy, and innocent creature he was when he came out of the hands of his infinitely-gracious Creator? And is it not evident that, whether we consider him as born into this disordered world, or dying out of it, or passing from the womb to the grave under a variety of calamitous circumstances, God's providential dealings with him prove that he is, by nature, in a corrupt and lost estate?

A part, how small, of this terraqueous globe
Is tenanted by man, the rest a waste.
Rocks, deserts, frozen seas, and burning sands,
Wild haunts of monsters, poisons, stings, and death;
Such is earth's melancholy map; but far
More sad, this earth is a true map of man;
So bounded are its haughty lord's delights;
So wide woe's empire, where deep troubles toss,
Loud sorrows howl, envenom'd passions bite,
Ravenous calamities our vitals seize,
And threat'ning fate wide opens to devour.—YOUNG.

THIRD PART.

We have hitherto considered man as a miserable inhabitant of a wretched world. We have seen him surrounded by multitudes of wants—pursued by legions of distresses, maladies, and woes—arrested by the king of terrors—cast into the grave, and shut up there, the loathsome prey of corruption and worms. Let us now consider him as a moral agent; and, by examining his disposition, character, and conduct, let us see whether he is wisely punished, according to the sentence of impartial justice; or wantonly tormented, at the caprice of arbitrary power.

We can not help acknowledging, it is highly reasonable, first, that all intelligent creatures should love, reverence, and obey their Creator; because he is most eminently their Father, their Master, and their King: secondly, that they should assist, support, and love each other, as fellow-subjects, fellow-servants, and children of the same universal parent: and, thirdly, that they should preserve their souls and bodies in peace and purity; by which means alone they can be happy in themselves, profitable to man, and acceptable to God. This is what we generally call natural religion; which is evidently founded upon eternal reason, the fitness of things, and the essential relations of persons.

The propriety of these sanctions is so self-evident, that the Gentiles, who have not the written law, are a law to themselves, and do—

but, alas! how seldom, and from what motives!—the things contained in the law; thus showing that the work, the sum and substance of the law, though much blotted by the fall, is still written in their heart. Nor will it be erased thence, in hell itself; for nothing but a sight of the equity of God's law can clear his vindictive justice in the guilty breast, give a scorpion's sting to the worm that gnaws the stubborn offender, and arm his upbraiding conscience with a whip of biting serpents.

Since the moral law so strongly recommends itself to reason, let us see how universally it is observed or broken; so shall matter of fact decide, whether we are pure and upright, or polluted and depraved.

TWELFTH ARGUMENT.

Those who reject the Scriptures, universally agree that all have sinned, and that in many things we offend all. Hence, it appears that persons of various constitutions, ranks, and education, in all nations, religions, times, and places, are born in such a state and with such a nature, that they infallibly commit many sins in thought, word, or deed.

But one transgression would be sufficient to render them obnoxious to God's displeasure, and to bring them under the fearful curse of his broken law; for, even according to the statutes of this realm, a man who once robs a traveler of a small sum of money, forfeits his life, as well as the bloody highwayman, who for years barba-

rously murders all those whom he stops, and accumulates immense wealth by his repeated barbarities.

The reason is obvious: both incur the penalty of the law which forbids robbery; for both effectually break it, though one does it oftener, and with far more aggravating circumstances than the other. So sure, then, as one robbery deserves the gallows, one sin deserves death; for the soul that sinneth, says God's law, and not the soul that committeth so many sins, of such or such a heinousness, it shall die. Hence it is that the first sin of the first man was punished both with spiritual and bodily death, and with ten thousand other evils. The justice of this sanction will appear in a satisfactory light, if we consider the following remarks:

1. In our present natural state, we are such strangers to God's glory and the spirituality of his law, and we are so used to drink the deadly poison of iniquity like water, that we have no idea of the horror which should seize upon us after a breach of the divine law. We are, therefore, as unfit judges of the atrociousness of sin, as lawless, hardened assassins, who shed human blood like water, are of the heinousness of murder.

2. As every willful sin arises from a disregard of that sovereign authority, which is equally stamped upon all the commandments, it hath in it the principle and nature of all possible iniquity; that is, the disregard and contempt of the Almighty.

3. There is no proper merit before God in the longest and most exact course of obedience, but infinite demerit in one, even the last act of willful disobedience. When we have done all that is commanded us, we are still unprofitable servants; for the self-sufficient God has no more need of us, than a mighty monarch of the vilest insect that creeps in the dust beneath his feet: and our best actions, strictly speaking, deserve absolutely nothing from our Creator and Preserver, because we owe him all we have, and are, and can possibly be. But if we transgress in one point, we ruin all our obedience, and expose ourselves to the just penalty of his broken law. The following example may illustrate this observation:

If a rich man gives a thousand meals to an indigent neighbor, he acts only as a man—he does nothing but his duty—and the Judge allows him no reward. But if he gives him only one dose of poison, he acts as a murderer, and must die a shameful death; so greatly does one act of sin outweigh a thousand acts of obedience! How exceedingly absurd, then, is the common notion, that our good works counterbalance our bad ones! Add to this that,

4. Guilt necessarily rises in proportion to the baseness of the offender, the greatness of the favors conferred upon him, and the dignity of the person offended. An insulting behavior to a servant is a fault, to a magistrate it is a crime, to a king it is treason. And what is willful sin, but an injury offered by an impotent rebel, to

the infinitely-powerful Lawgiver of the universe, to the kindest of benefactors, to the gracious Creator and Preserver of men—an insult given to the supreme Majesty of heaven and earth, in whose glorious presence the dignity of the greatest potentates and archangels as truly disappears as the splendor of the stars in the blaze of the meridian sun? Sin, therefore, flying into the face of such a Lawgiver, Benefactor, and Monarch, has in it a kind of infinite demerit from its infinite object; and rebellious, ungrateful, wretched man, who commits it a thousand times with a thousand aggravations, may, in the nervous language of our Church, be said, in some sense, to deserve a thousand hells, if there were so many.

THIRTEENTH ARGUMENT.

Our natural depravity manifests itself by constant omissions of duty, as much as by flagrant commission of sin, and perhaps much more. Take one instance out of many that might be produced. Constant displays of preserving goodness, and presents undeservedly and uninterruptedly bestowed upon us, deserve a perpetual tribute of heart-felt gratitude: God demands it in his law; and conscience, his agent in our souls, declares it ought in justice to be paid.

But where shall we find a Deist properly conscious of what he owes the supreme Being for his "creation, preservation, and all the blessings of his life?" And where a Christian, duly sensible of "God's inestimable love in the redemp-

tion of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ?" A due sense of his ever-multiplied mercies would fill our souls with never-ceasing wonder, and make our lips overflow with rapturous praise. The poet's language would suit our grateful sensations, and, without exaggeration, paint the just ardor of our transports:

"Bound, every heart, and every bosom burn;
Praise, flow forever, (if astonishment
Will give thee leave,) my praise, forever flow—
Praise ardent, cordial, constant," etc.

Is not any thing short of this thankful frame of mind a sin of omission, a degree of ingratitude, of which all are naturally guilty, and for which, it is to be feared, the best owe ten thousand talents both to Divine goodness and justice?

Throw only a few bones to a dog, and you win him; he follows you; your word becomes his law; upon the first motion of your hand he flies through land and water to execute your commands: obedience is his delight, and your presence his paradise: he convinces you of it by all the demonstrations of joy which he is capable of giving; and if he unhappily loses sight of you, he exerts all his sagacity to trace your footsteps; nor will he rest till he finds his benefactor again.

Shall a brute be so thankful to a man for some offals, while man himself is so full of ingratitude to God who created him, preserves his life from destruction, and hourly crowns him with mercies and loving-kindness? How should shame cover

our guilty faces! Surely, if the royal prophet could say he was a beast before God, may we not well confess that, in point of gratitude, we are worse than the dullest and most stupid part of the brute creation? For even the ox, says the Lord, knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib; but Israel doth not know me, my people doth not consider my daily favors. And if the very heathens affirm, that to call a man ungrateful to a human benefactor, was to say of him all possible evil in one word,* how can we express the baseness and depravity of mankind, who are universally so ungrateful to so bounteous a benefactor as God himself.

FOURTEENTH ARGUMENT.

But, though we seem made of cold inattention, when the sight of Divine mercies should kindle our hearts into gratitude and praise, we soon get out of this languid frame of mind; for, in the pursuit of sensual gratifications, we are all activity and warmth; we seem an ardent compound of life and fire.

What can be the reason of this amazing difference? What but rebellious sense and wanton appetite, raised at the sight or idea of some forbidden object! The bait of pleasure appears—corrupt nature summons all her powers—every nerve of expectation is stretched—every pulse of desire beats high—the blood is in a general ferment—the spirits are in a universal hurry—

* Ingratum si dixeris, omnia dicis.—*Juv.*

and though the hook of a fatal consequence is often apparent, the alluring bait must be swallowed. The fear of God, the most inestimable of all treasures, is already gone; and if the sinful gratification can not be enjoyed upon any other term, a good reputation shall go also. Reason, indeed, makes remonstrances; but the loud clamors of flesh and blood soon drown her soft whispers. The carnal mind steps imperiously upon the throne; sense, that conquers the greatest conquerors, bears down all opposition; the yielding man is led captive by a brutish lust; and while angels blush, there is a joy in hell over the actual and complete degradation of a heaven-born spirit.

Some, indeed, affirm that these conflicts suit a state of probation and trial. But it is evident that either our temptations are too violent for our strength, or our strength too weak for our temptations; since, notwithstanding the additional help of Divine grace, there never was a mere mortal over whom they never triumphed.

Nor can we exculpate ourselves by pleading, that these triumphs of sense over reason are neither long nor frequent. Alas! how many perpetrate an act of wickedness in a moment, and suffer death itself for a crime which they never repeated!

See that crystal vessel. Its brightness and brittleness represent the shining and delicate nature of true virtue. If I let it fall, and break it, what avails it to say, "I never broke it before; I dropped it but once; I am excessively sorry

for my carelessness; I will set the pieces together, and never break it again?" Will these excuses and resolutions prevent the vessel from being broken—broken for ever? The reader may easily make the application.

Even heathen moralists, by their fabulous account of the companions of Ulysses turned into swine, upon drinking once of Circe's enchanted cup, teach us, that one fall into sensuality turns a man into a brute, just as one slip into unchastity or dishonesty changes a modest woman into a strumpet, or an honest man into a thief. Again:

Ought not reason to have as absolute a command over appetite, as a skillful rider has over a well-broken horse? But suppose we saw all horsemen universally mastered, one time or other, by their beasts, and forced, though but for a few minutes, to receive the bit, and go or stop at the pleasure of the wanton brutes; should we not wonder, and justly infer, that man had lost the kind of superiority which he still maintains over domestic animals? And what, then, but the commonness of the case, can prevent our being shocked when we see rational creatures overcome and led captive by carnal appetites? Is not this the wanton, rebellious beast, mounting upon his vanquished, dastardly rider?

We may then conclude, that the universal rebellion of our lower faculties against our superior powers, and the triumphs of sense over reason, demonstrate that human nature has suffered as fatal a revolution as these kingdoms did when a

degraded king was seen bleeding on the scaffold, and a base usurper lording it in the seat of majesty.

FIFTEENTH ARGUMENT.

Happy would it be for us, if our fall manifested itself only by some transient advantages of sense over reason. But, alas! the experience of the best demonstrates the truth of Isaiah's words, The whole head is sick.

The say nothing of the gross stupidity and unconquerable ignorance that keeps the generality of mankind just above the level of brutes, how strong, how clear is the *understanding* of men of sense in worldly affairs! How weak, how dark in spiritual things! How few idiots are there but can distinguish between the shadow and the substance, the cup and the liquor, the dress and the person! But how many learned men, to this day, see no difference between water baptism and spiritual regeneration, between the means of grace and grace itself, between the form and the power of godliness! At our devotions, is not our mind generally like the roving butterfly? and at our favorite diversions, and lucrative business, like the fastening leech? Can it not fix itself on any thing sooner than on the one thing needful; and find out any way before that of peace and salvation?

What can be more extravagant than our *imagination?* How often have we caught this wild power forming and pursuing phantoms, building and pulling down castles in the air! how fre-

quently hath it raised us into proud conceits, and then sunk us into gloomy apprehensions! And where is the man that it never led into such mental scenes of vanity and lewdness, as would have made him the object of universal contempt, if the vail of a grave and modest countenance had not happily concealed him from public notice?

And has our *Memory* escaped unimpaired by the fall? Alas! let us only consider, how easily we forget the favors of our Creator, and recollect the injuries of our fellow-creatures; how little we retain of a good book or pious discourse, and how much of a play or frivolous conversation; and how exactly we remember an invitation to a party of pleasure, while the loudest calls to turn to God and prepare for death, are no sooner heard than forgotten: let us, I say, consider these things, and we shall be forced to confess, that this useful power loses like a sieve the living water of truth, drinks in like a sponge the muddy streams of vanity, and is never so retentive as when it is excited by revenge, or some other detestable temper.

"A wretch that is condemned to die to-morrow can not forget it," says Baxter: "yet poor sinners, who are uncertain to live an hour, and certain speedily to see the majesty of the Lord, to their inconceivable joy or terror, can forget these things, for which they have their memory, and which, one would think, should drown the matters of this world, as the report of a cannon does a whisper, or as the sun obscures the poorest

glow-worm. O wonderful stupidity of an unregenerate soul! O astonishing distraction of the ungodly! That every man can forget eternal joy, eternal woe, the eternal God, and the place of their unchangeable abode; when they stand even at the door, and there is but the thin vail of flesh between them and that amazing sight, that eternal gulf, into which thousands are daily plunging."

Nor does our *reason** make us amends for the defects of our other faculties. Its beams, it is true, wonderfully guide some persons through the circle of sciences, and the mazes of commercial or political affairs. But, when it should lead us in the search of the truth which is after godliness, unless it is assisted from above, how are its faint rays obstructed by the gross medium of flesh and blood, broken by that of passion, and sometimes lost in that of prejudice? Wise sons of reason, learned philosophers, your two hundred and eighty-eight opinions concerning the chief good, are a multiplied proof of my sad assertion: all miss the mark. Not one of them makes the supreme felicity to consist in the knowledge and enjoyment of God, the amiable and adorable Parent of all good.

True reason, alas! is as rare as true piety. The poor thing, which, in spiritual matters, the world calls reason, is only the ape of that noble

* By reason, I mean that power by which we pass judgment upon, and draw inferences from, what the understanding has simply apprehended.

faculty. How partial, how unreasonable* is this false pretender! If it does not altogether overlook the awful realities of the invisible world, which is too frequently the case, how busy is it to reason away faith, and raise objections against the most evident truth,† even that which I now

* Our earth's the bedlam of the universe,
Where Reason (undiseased in heaven) runs mad,
And nurses Folly's children as her own,
Fond of the foulest.—YOUNG.

† A late publication, in vindication of Pelagianism, appears to me no small instance of this. The reverend author takes his estimate of human nature, not from universal experience, but his indulged imagination; not from St. Paul, the chief of the apostles, but from Dr. Taylor, to whom he acknowledges his obligations for several of the best passages in his sermon. Passing over the exposition of his text, where he oddly supposes that our Lord meant, by the drawing of God, the natural powers of man, which is as reasonable as to suppose, that when he said, Without *me* ye can do nothing, he meant that *me* should signify ourselves. Passing this over, I shall just point out his capital mistake. He tells us that all our faculties and powers *are* good and beautiful in their order, (that they were so before the fall is fully granted,) and tend naturally to the happiness both of the individual and of the system; and he adds, how weak soever and imperfect our intellectual faculties may be, yet to speak reproachfully of them in general is a species of blasphemy against our Creator. If to expose the present weakness of our rational faculties, and show how greatly they are disordered and impaired by the fall, is what this divine calls speaking reproachfully of them, have not the best men been guilty of this pretended blasphemy? How far the apostles and reformers carried it, may be seen in the first part of this treatise. How he can clear himself of it, as a subscriber to the ninth, tenth, and thirty-fifth articles of our Church, I can not see; and by what means he will justify his conduct to the world, in receiving hundreds a year to maintain the doctrine of the Church of England, while he publicly exposes it as a species of blasphemy, is still a greater mys-

contend for? And when right reason has been worsted by sense, how ready is the impostor to plead against the faculty which it personates! How skillful in cloaking bad habits under the genteel name of "human foibles!" And how ingenious in defending the most irrational and dangerous methods of losing time, as "innocent sports and harmless diversions!"

tery. Far from seeing that all the faculties and powers, by which this is done, are good and beautiful, I can not help thinking that some of them are materially defective; and that though such a conduct may very much tend to the emolument of the individual, it has little tendency to the happiness of the system. For my part, were I to commence advocate for the uprightness of human nature, I would save appearances, lest Dr. Taylor himself should say, *Non defensoribus istis*, etc. But, dropping this point, I appeal to common sense: who is most guilty of blasphemy against our Creator, he who says God made man both holy and happy, affirming that the present weakness of our rational powers is entirely owing to the original apostasy of mankind, or he who intimates that the gracious Author of our being formed our intellectual faculties weak and imperfect as they now are? If it is not the latter, my understanding is strangely defective. In vain does this learned divine tell us, that the candle of the Lord which was lighted up in man at first, when the inspiration of the Almighty gave him understanding, was not extinguished by the original apostasy, but has kept burning ever since, and that the divine flame has catched from father to son, and has been propagated quite down to the present generation. If it is reasonable to charge with a species of blasphemy those who reverence their Creator too much to father our present state of imperfection upon him, I must confess my reason fails. I have outlived the divine flame for one, or it never catched from my father to me. A fear lest some well-meaning person should mistake the taper of Pelagius, or the lamp of Dr. Taylor, for the candle of the Lord, and follow it in the destructive paths of error, extorts this note from my pen. See the objections that follow the twenty-second Argument.

These observations, which must appear self-evident to all who know the world or themselves, incontestably prove the degeneracy of all our rational powers, and, consequently, the universality of our natural corruption.

SIXTEENTH ARGUMENT.

When the whole head is sick, is not the whole heart faint? Can our will, conscience, and affections run parallel to the line of duty, when our understanding, imagination, memory, and reason, are so much warped from original rectitude? Impossible! Experience, thou best of judges, I appeal to thee. Erect thy fair tribunal in the reader's breast, and bear an honest testimony of the truth of the following assertions.

Our *will*, in general, is full of obstinacy; we must have our own way, right or wrong. 'Tis pregnant with inconstancy: we are passionately fond of a thing one day, and tired of it the next; we form good resolutions in the morning, and break them before night. 'Tis impotent: when we see what is right, instead of doing it with all our might, we frequently remain as inactive as if we were bound by invisible chains; and we wonder by what charms the wheels of duty thus stop against our apparent inclination, till we discover that the spring of our will is broken, or naturally works the wrong way; yes, it is not only unable to follow the good, that the understanding approves, but full of perverseness to pursue the evil, that reason disapproves. We are prone to do, contrary to our design, those

things which breed remorse and wound conscience: and, sooner or later, we may all say with the heathen princess who was going to murder her child,

Video meliora, proboque,
*Deteriora sequor.**

Nor is *conscience* itself untainted. Alas! how slow is it to reprove in some cases! In others, how apt not to do it at all! In one person, it is easy under mountains of guilt; and in another, it is unreasonably scrupulous about mere trifles; it either strains at a gnat, or swallows a camel; when it is alarmed, in some it shows itself ready to be made easy by every wrong method; in others, it obstinately refuses to be pacified by the right. To-day, you may with propriety compare it to a dumb dog, that does not bark at a thief; and, to-morrow, to a snarling cur, that flies indifferently at a friend, a foe, or a shadow, and then madly turns upon himself, and tears his own flesh.

If conscience, the best power of the unconverted man, is so corrupt, good God! what are his *affections?* Almost perpetually deficient in some, and excessive in others, when do they attain to, or stop at, the line of moderation? Who can tell how oft he has been the sport of their irregularity and violence? One hour we are hurried into rashness by their impetuosity: the next, we are bound in sloth by their inactivity.

* If the reader wants to know the English of these words, he may find it Rom. vii, 15.

Sometimes every blast of foolish hope, or ill-grounded fear; every gale of base desire, or unreasonable aversion; every wave of idolatrous love, or sinful hatred; every surge of misplaced admiration, or groundless horror; every billow of noisy joy, or undue sorrow, tosses, raises, or sinks our soul, as a ship in a storm, which has neither rudder nor ballast. At other times we are totally becalmed; all our sails are furled; not one breath of devout or human affection stirs in our stoical, frozen breast; and we remain stupidly insensible, till the spark of temptation, dropping upon the combustible matter in our hearts, blows us up again into loud passion; and then how dreadful and ridiculous together is the new explosion!

If experience pronounces that these reflections are just, the point is gained. Our whole heart is faint, through the unaccountable disorders of our will, the lethargy or boisterous fits of our conscience, and the swooning, or high fever, of our affections; and we may, without hypocrisy, join in our daily confession, and say, "There is no health in us."

SEVENTEENTH ARGUMENT.

The danger of these complicated maladies of our souls, evidences itself, by the most fatal of all symptoms, our manifest alienation from God. Yes, shocking as the confession is, we must make it, if truth has any dominion in our breast: unrenewed man loves not his God. That eternal beauty, for whose contemplation, that su-

preme good, for whose enjoyment he was created, is generally forgotten, despised, or hated. If the thought of his Holy Majesty presents itself he looks upon it as an intruder; it lays him under as disagreeable a restraint as that which the presence of a grave, pious master, puts upon a wanton, idle servant; nor can he quietly pursue his sinful courses, till he has driven away the troublesome idea; or imagined, with the epicure, a careless God, who wants resolution to call him to an account, and justice to punish him for his iniquity.

Does any one offer an indignity to his favorite friend, or only speak contemptuously of the object of his esteem, he feels as if he was the person insulted, and reddening with indignation, directly espouses his cause; but every body, the meanest of his attendants not excepted, may with impunity insult the King of kings in his presence, and take the most profane liberties with his name and word, his laws and ministers; he hears the wild blasphemy, and regards it not; he sees the horrid outrage, and resents it not; and yet, amazing infatuation! he pretends to love God.

If he goes to the play, he can fix his roving eyes and wandering mind, three hours together upon the same trifling object, not only without weariness, but with uncommon delight. If he has an appointment with the person whom he adores as a deity, his spirits are elevated—expectation and joy flutter in his dilated breast—he sweetly anticipates the pleasing interview, or impatiently chides the slowly-flowing minutes;

his feelings are inexpressible. But if he attends the great congregation, which he too often omits upon the most frivolous pretenses, it is rather out of form and decency, than out of devotion and love; rather with indifference or reluctance, than with delight and transport. And when he is present there, how absent are his thoughts! How wandering his eyes! How trifling, supine, irreverent* his whole behavior! He would be ashamed to speak to the meanest of his servants with as little attention as he sometimes prays to the Majesty of heaven. Were he to stare about when he gives them orders, as he does when he presents his supplications to the Lord of lords, he would be afraid they would think he was half drunk, or had a touch of lunacy.

Suppose he still retains a sense of outward decency, while the Church goes through her solemn offices; yet how heavy are his spirits! how heartless his confessions! how cold his prayers! The blessing comes at last, and he is blessed indeed—not with the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost; for that he gladly leaves to "poor enthusiasts"—but with a release from his confinement and tedious work. And now that he has "done his duty, and served God," he hastens away to the company that suits his taste.

* Men homage pay to men,
Thoughtless beneath whose dreadful eye they bow
In mutual awe profound, of clay to clay,
Of guilt to guilt, and turn their backs on Thee,
Great Sire! whom thrones celestial ceaseless sing;
To prostrate angels an amazing scene!—YOUNG.

See him there. Do not his very looks declare he is in his own element? With what eagerness of spirit, energy of gesture, and volubility of tongue, does he talk over his last entertainment, chase, or bargain? Does not the oil of cheerfulness make all his motions as free and easy as if weight and friction had no place at all in his light and airy frame?

Love of God, thou sweetest, strongest of all powers, didst thou ever thus metamorphose his soul, and impart such a sprightly activity to his body? And you that converse most familiarly with him, did you ever hear him say, Come, and I will tell you what the Lord has done for my soul: taste, and see how good the Lord is? No, never; for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh; nor can it be expected that God, who hath no place in his joyous reflections, should have one in his cheerful conversation. On the contrary, it will be matter of surprise to those who introduce the delightful subject of the love of God, if he does not waive it off, as dull, melancholy, or enthusiastical.

But as he will give you to understand "he is no hypocrite, and, therefore, confines devotion to his closet," follow him there. Alas! he scarce ever bends the knee to Him that sees in secret: or, if he says his prayers as regularly as he winds his watch, it is much in the same spirit; for suppose he does not hurry them over, or cut them as short as possible, yet the careless, formal manner in which he offers them up, indicates as plainly as his public conduct, the aversion lurk-

ing in his heart against God: and yet he fancies he loves him: with a sneer that indicates self-applause, and a pharisaic contempt of others, "Away with all your feelings and raptures," says he; "this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments." But, alas! which of them does he keep? Certainly not the first; for the Lord is the supreme object of his hopes and fears, his confidence and joy; nor yet the last; for discontent and wrong desires are still indulged in his selfish and worldly heart. How unfortunate, therefore, is his appeal to the commandments, by which his secret enmity to the law, government, and nature of God, is brought to the clearest light!

EIGHTEENTH ARGUMENT.

But as the heart-felt love of God is supposed to be downright enthusiasm by some moralists, who, dashing in pieces the first table of the law against the second, pretend that all our duty to God consists in the love of our neighbor, let us examine the unconverted man's charity, and see whether he bears more love to his fellow-creatures than to his Creator.

Nothing can be more erroneous than his notions of charity. He confounds it with the bare giving of alms; not considering that it is possible to do this kind of good from the most selfish and uncharitable motives. Therefore, when the fear of being accounted covetous, the desire of passing for generous, the vanity of seeing his name in a list of noble subscribers, the shame

of being outdone by his equals, the teazing importunity of an obstinate beggar, the moving address of a solicitor, whom he would blush to deny, or the pharisaic notion of making amends for his sins, and purchasing heaven by his alms—when any, I say, of these sinister motives sets him upon assisting industrious poverty, relieving friendless old age, or supporting infirm and mutilated indigence, he fancies that he gives an indubitable proof of his charity.

Sometimes, too, he affixes to that word the idea of a fond hope that every body is going to heaven: for if you intimate that the rich voluptuary is not with Lazarus, in Abraham's bosom, and that the foolish virgins are not promiscuously admitted to glory with the wise, he wonders at "your uncharitableness," and thanks God "he never entertained such unchristian thoughts of his neighbors."

He considers not that charity is the fair offspring of the love of God, to which he is yet an utter stranger; and that it consists in a universal, disinterested benevolence to all mankind, our worst enemies not excepted—a benevolence that sweetly evidences itself by bearing with patience the evil which they do to us, and kindly doing them all the good we possibly can, both with respect to their soul and body, their property and reputation.

If this is a just definition of charity, the unrenewed man has not even the outside of it. To prove it, I might appeal to his impatience and ill-humor, his unkind words and cutting rail-

leries, (for I suppose him too moral ever to slander or curse any one;) I might mention his supercilious behavior to some, who are entitled to his affability as men, countrymen, and neighbors; I might expatiate on his readiness to exculpate, enrich, or aggrandize himself at the expense of others, whenever he can do it without exposing himself.

But, waiving all these particulars, I ask, Whom does he truly love? You answer, "Doubtless the person to whom he makes daily protestations of the warmest regard." But how does he prove this regard? Why, perhaps, by the most artful insinuations, and dangerous attempts to rob her of her virtue. Perhaps he has already gained his end. Unhappy Magdalen! How much better would it have been for thee to have fallen into the hands of a highwayman! Thou wouldst only have lost thy money, but now thou art despoiled of the honor of thy sex, and the peace of thy mind: thou art robbed at once of virgin innocence, a fair reputation, and possibly a healthy constitution. If this is a specimen of the unconverted man's love, what must be his hatred?

But I haply mistake: "He is no libertine; he has a virtuous wife, and amiable children, and he loves them," say you, "with the tenderest affection." I reply, that these relations, being immortal spirits, confined for a few years in a tenement of clay, and continually on the remove for eternity, his laudable regard for their frail bodies, and proper care of their temporal pros-

perity, are not a sufficient proof that he loves them in a right manner. For even according to wise heathens, our soul is our better part, our true self.* And what tender concern does the unrenewed man feel for the soul of his bosom friend? Does he regard it more than the body of his groom, or the life of his horse? Does he, with any degree of importunity, carry it daily in the arms of love and prayer to the throne of grace for life and salvation? Does he, by good instructions, and a virtuous example, excite his children to secure an eternal inheritance; and is he at least as desirous to see them wise and pious; as well-bred, rich, handsome, and great? Alas! I fear it is just the reverse. He is probably the first to poison their tender minds with some of the dangerous maxims that vanity and ambition have invented; and, supposing he has a favorite dog, it is well if he is not more anxious for the preservation of that one domestic animal, than for the salvation of all their souls.

If these observations are founded upon matter of fact, as daily experience demonstrates, I appeal to common sense, and ask, Can the natural man, with all his fondness, be said to have a true love even for his nearest relatives? And is not the regard that he manifests for their bodies more like the common instinct, by which doves cleave to their mates, and swallows provide for their young, than like the generous affection which a rational creature ought to bear to im-

* Nos non corpora sumus: Corpus quidem vas est aut aliquod animi receptaculum.—*Cic. Tusc. Quæst., lib.* 1.

mortal *spirits*, awfully hovering in a scale of probation, which is just going to turn for hell or heaven?

NINETEENTH ARGUMENT.

Nor is it surprising that the unrenewed man should be devoid of all true love to his nearest relations; for he is so completely fallen, that he bears no true love even to himself. Let us overlook those who cut their throats, shoot, drown, or hang themselves. Let us take no notice of those who sacrifice a year's health for a night's revel; who inflame their blood into fevers, or drive putrefaction into their bones, for the momentary gratification of a shameful appetite; and are so hot in the pursuit of a base pleasure, that they leap after it even into the jaws of an untimely grave: let us, I say, pass by those innumerable, unhappy victims of intemperance and debauchery, who squander their money upon panders and harlots, and have as little regard for their health as for their fortune and reputation; and let us consider the case of those good-natured, decent persons, who profess to have a real value for both.

Upon the principle laid down in the last Argument, may I not ask, What love have these for their immortal part, their true self? What do they do for their souls? Or, rather, what do they not leave undone? And who can show less concern for their greatest interest than they?

Alas! in spiritual matters, the wisest of them seem on a level with the most foolish. They

anxiously secure their title to a few possessions in this transitory world, out of which the stream of time carries them with unabated impetuosity, while they remain* stupidly thoughtless of their portion in the unchangeable world, into which they are just going to launch; they take particular notice of every trivial incident in life, every idle report raised in their neighborhood, and supinely overlook the great realities of death and judgment, hell and heaven.

You see them perpetually contriving how to preserve, indulge, and adorn their dying bodies, and daily neglecting the safety, welfare, and ornament of their immortal souls. So great is their folly, that earthly toys make them slight heavenly thrones! So willful their self-deception, that a point of time† hides from them a

* Time flies, death urges, knells call, heaven invites,
Hell threatens; all exerts; in effort all:
More than creation labors! labors more!
And is there in creation, what, amidst
This tumult universal, wing'd dispatch,
And ardent energy, supinely yawns?
Man sleeps—and man alone; and man, whose fate—
Fate irreversible, entire, extreme,
Endless, hair-hung, breeze-shaken—o'er the gulf
A moment trembles—drops! and man, for whom
All else is in alarm—man, the sole cause
Of this surrounding storm!—and yet he sleeps,
As the storm rock'd to rest.—YOUNG.

† And is it in the flight of threescore years
To push eternity from human thought,
And bury souls immortal in the dust?
A soul immortal spending all her fires,
Wasting her strength in strenuous idleness;
Thrown into tumult, raptured, or alarm'd,

boundless eternity! So perverted is their moral taste, that they nauseate the word of truth, the precious food of souls, and greedily run upon the tempter's hook, if it is but made of solid gold, or gilt over with the specious appearance of honor, or only baited with the prospect of a favorite diversion. And while, by uneasy, fretful tempers, they too often impair their bodily health, by exorbitant affections, and pungent cares, they frequently break their hearts, or pierce themselves through with many sorrows.

Does such a conduct deserve the name of well-ordered self-love, or preposterous self-hatred? O man, sinful man, how totally art thou depraved, if thou art not only thine own most dangerous enemy, but often thy most cruel tormentor!

TWENTIETH ARGUMENT.

This depravity is productive of the most detestable brood. When it has suppressed the love of God, perverted the love of our neighbor, and vitiated self-love, it soon gives birth to a variety of execrable tempers and dire affections, which should have no place but in the breast of fiends, no outbreaking but in the chambers of hell.

If you ask their name, I answer, Pride, that odious vice, which feeds on the praises it slyly procures, lives by the applause it has meanly

> At aught this scene can threaten or indulge,
> Resembles ocean into tempest wrought
> To waft a feather or to drown a fly.—YOUNG.

courted, and is equally stabbed by the reproof of a friend, and the sneer of a foe. The spirit of Independence, which can not bear control, is galled by the easiest yoke, gnaws the slender cords of just authority, as if they were the heavy chains of tyrannical power; nor ever ceases struggling till they break, and he can say: "Now I am my own master." Ambition and Vanity, which, like Proteus, take a thousand shapes, and wind a thousand ways, to climb up the high seat of power, shine on the tottering stage of honor, wear the golden badge of fortune, glitter in the gaudy pomp of dress, and draw, by distinguishing appearances, the admiration of a gaping multitude. Sloth, which unnerves the soul, enfeebles the body, and makes the whole man deaf to the calls of duty, loth to set about his business—even when want, fear, or shame drives him to it—ready to postpone or omit it upon any pretense, and willing to give up even the interests of society, virtue, and religion, so he may saunter undisturbed, doze the time away in stupid inactivity, or enjoy himself in that dastardly indolence, which passes in the world for quietness and good-nature. Envy, that looks with an evil eye at the good things our competitors enjoy, takes a secret pleasure in their misfortunes, under various pretexts exposes their faults, slyly tries to add to our reputation what it detracts from theirs, and stings our heart when they eclipse us by their greater success or superior excellences. Covetousness, which is always dissatisfied with its portion, watches it with tor-

menting fears, increases it by every sordid means, and turning its own executioner, justly pines for want over the treasure it madly saves for a prodigal heir. Impatience, which frets at every thing, finds fault with every person, and madly tears herself under the distressing sense of a present evil, or the anxious expectation of an absent good. Wrath, which distorts our faces, racks our breasts, alarms our households, threatens, curses, stamps, and storms, even upon imaginary or trifling provocations. Jealousy, that through a fatal skill in diabolical optics, sees contempt in all the words of a favorite friend, discovers infidelity in all his actions, lives upon the wicked suspicions it begets, and turns the sweets of the mildest passion into wormwood and gall. Idolatrous love, which preys upon the spirits, consumes the flesh, tears the throbbing heart, and when it is disappointed, frequently forces its wretched slaves to lay violent hands upon themselves. Hatred of our fellow-creatures, which keeps us void of tender benevolence, a chief ingredient in the bliss of angels, and fills us with some of the most unhappy sensations belonging to accursed spirits. Malice, which takes an unnatural, hellish pleasure, in teasing beasts, and hurting men, in their persons, properties, or reputation. And the offspring of malice, Revenge,*

* Man hard of heart to man! of horrid things
Most horrid! Midst stupendous, highly strange!
Yet oft his courtesies are smoother wrongs;
Pride brandishes the favors he confers,
And contumelious his humanity:

who always thirsts after mischief or blood; and shares the only delight of devils, when he can repay a real or fancied injury sevenfold. Hypocrisy, who borrows the cloak of religion; bids her flexible muscles imitate vital piety; attends at the sacred altars, to make a show of her fictitious devotion; there raises her affected zeal in proportion to the number of the spectators; calls upon God to get the praise of man; and lifts up adulterous eyes and thievish hands to heaven, to procure herself the good things of the earth. And Hypocrisy's sister, narrow-hearted Bigotry, who pushes from her Civility and Good-nature, stops her ears against arguments and entreaties; calls Huguenots, infidels, Papists, or heretics, all who do not directly subscribe to her absurd or impious creeds; dogs them with a malignant eye; throws stones or dirt at them about an empty ceremony, or an indifferent opinion; and at last, if she can, sets churches or kingdoms on fire, about a turban, a surplice, or a cowl. Perfidiousness, who puts on the looks of true benevolence, speaks the language of the warmest affection; with solemn protestations invites men to depend on her sincerity, while she lays a deep plot for their sudden destruction; and, with repeated oaths, beseeches Heaven to be witness of her artless innocence,

> What then his vengeance! Hear it not, ye stars!
> And thou, pale moon! turn paler at the sound,
> Man is to man the sorest, surest ill——
> Heaven's Sovereign saves all beings but himself,
> That hideous sight, a naked human heart.—YOUNG.

while she moves the center of hell to accomplish her dire designs. The fatal hour is come—her stratagem has succeeded—and she now kisses and betrays, drinks health and poisons—offers a friendly embrace, and gives a deadly stab. Despair, who scorns to be beholden to Mercy, gives the lie to all the declarations issued from the throne of grace, obstinately turns his wild eyes from the great expiatory sacrifice; and, at last, impatient to drink the cup of trembling, wildly looks for some weapon to destroy himself. Distraction, begotten by the shocking mixture of two or more of these infernal passions, raised to the highest degree of extravagance—distraction, that wrings her hands, tears her disheveled hair, fixes her ghastly eyes, turns her swimming brains, quenches the last spark of reason, and, like a fierce tiger, must at last be chained by the hand of caution, and confined with iron bars in her dreary dwelling.

And to close the dismal train, Self-murder, who always points wretched mortals to ponds and rivers, or presents them with cords, razors, pistols, daggers, and poison, and perpetually urges them to the choice of one of them. "You are guilty, miserable creatures," whispers he: "the sun of prosperity is forever set, the deepest night of distress is come upon you; you are in a hell of woe; the hell prepared for Satan can not be worse than that which you feel, but it may be more tolerable; take this, and boldly force your passage out of the cursed state in which you groan." He persuades, and his desperate

victims, tired of the company of their fellow-mortals, fly for refuge to that of devils! they shut their eyes, and, horrible to say! but how much more horrible to do! deliberately venture from one hell into another, to seek ease; or, to speak with more truth, leap, with all the miseries of a known hell, into all the horrors of one which is unknown.

And are your hearts, O ye sons of men, the favorite seats of this infernal crew? Then shame on the wretch that made the first panegyric on the dignity of human nature! He proved my point; he began in pride, and ended in distraction.

Detestable as these vices and tempers are, where is the natural man that is always free from them? Where is even the child ten years old, who never felt most of these vipers, upon some occasion or other, shooting their venom through his lips, darting their baleful influence through his eyes, or at least stirring and hissing in his disturbed breast? If any one never felt them, he may be pronounced more than mortal; but if he has, his own experience furnishes him with a sensible demonstration, that he is a fallen spirit, infected with the poison that rages in the devil himself.

TWENTY-FIRST ARGUMENT.

Bad roots, which vigorously shoot in the spring, will naturally produce their dangerous fruit in summer. We may, therefore, go one step farther, and ask, where is the man thirty years old,

whose depravity has not broken out into the greatest variety of sinful acts? Among the persons of that age, who never were esteemed worse than their neighbors, shall we find a forehead that never betrayed daring insolence? A cheek, that never indicated concealed guilt by an involuntary blush, or unnatural paleness? A neck, that never was stretched out in pride and vain confidence? An eye, that never cast a disdainful, malignant, or wanton look? An ear, that an evil curiosity never opened to frothy, loose, or defaming discourse? A tongue, that never was tainted with unedifying, false, indecent, or uncharitable language? A palate, that never became the seat of luxurious indulgence? A throat, that never was the channel of excess? A stomach, that never felt the oppressive load of abused mercies? Hands, that never plucked or touched the forbidden fruit of pleasing sin? Feet, that never once moved in the broad, downward road of iniquity? And a bosom, that never heaved under the dreadful workings of some exorbitant passion? Where, in short, is there a face ever so disagreeable, that never was the object of self-worship in a glass? And where a body, however deformed, that never was set up as a favorite idol by the fallen spirit that inhabits it?

If iniquity thus works by all the powers, and breaks out through all the parts of the human body, we may conclude, by woeful experience, not only that the plague of sin is begun, but that it rages with universal fury; and to use again

the evangelical prophet's words, that from the sole of the foot, even to the head of the natural man, there is no spiritual soundness in him, but wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores.

TWENTY-SECOND ARGUMENT.

What can be said of each individual, may, with the same propriety, be affirmed of all the different nations of the earth. Let an impartial judge take four unconverted men or children, from the four parts of the world. Let him examine their actions, and trace them back to their spring; and, if he makes some allowance for the accidental difference of their climate, constitution, taste, and education, he will soon find their disposition as equally earthly, sensual, and devilish, as if they had all been cast in the same mold. Yes, as oak-trees are oaks all the world over, though by particular circumstances some grow taller and harder, and some more knotted and crooked than others, so all unregenerate men resemble one another; for all are proud, self-willed, impenitent, and lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God.

Do not sloth, gluttony, drunkenness, and uncleanness; cheating, defrauding, stealing, and oppression; lying, perjury, treachery, and cruelty, stalk openly or lurk secretly every-where? Are not all these vices predominant among black and white people, among savages and civilized nations, among Turks and Jews, heathens and Christians, whether they live on the banks of the Ganges or the Thames, the Mississippi or the

Seine? whether they starve in the snows of Lapland, or burn in the sands of Guinea?

O sin! thou fatal pest: thou soul-destroying plague! would to God thy fixed abode were only in the Levant! and that, like the external pestilence, thou wert chiefly confined to the Turkish dominions! But, alas! the gross immorality and profaneness—the various crimes and villanies—the desperate impiety and wild blasphemy, under which every kingdom and city has groaned, and still continues to do night and day, over the face of the whole earth, are black spots so similar, and symptoms so equally terrible, that we are obliged to confess they must have a common internal principle—which can be no other than a bad habit of soul—a fallen, corrupted nature. Yes, the universality and equality of the effects show to an unprejudiced mind that the cause is universal, and equally interwoven with the nature which is common to all nations, and remains the same in all countries and ages.

FIVE OBJECTIONS.

I. If the self-righteous moralist answers that "sin and wickedness are not so universal as this argument supposes," I reply, that the more we are acquainted with ourselves, with the history of the dead, and secret transactions of the living, the more we are convinced, that if all are not guilty of outward enormities, all are deeply tainted with spiritual wickedness.

Even those excellent persons who, like Jere-

miah, have been in part sanctified before they came forth out of the womb, can, from sad experience, confess with him that the heart is deceitful above all things, and say, with David, my heart showeth me the wickedness of the ungodly.

Thousands, indeed, boast of the goodness of their hearts; they flatter themselves that to be righteous, it is enough to avoid gross acts of intemperance and injustice; with the Pharisees, they shut their eyes against the destructive nature of the love of the world, the thirst of praise, the fear of men, the love of ease, sloth, sensuality, indevotion, self-righteousness, discontent, impatience, selfishness, carnal security, unbelief, hardness of heart, and a thousand other spiritual evils. Full of self-ignorance, like Peter, they imagine there is no combustible matter of wickedness in their breasts, because they are not actually fired by the spark of a suitable temptation. And when they hear what their corrupt nature may one day prompt them to, they cry out, with Hazael, Am I a dog, that I should do this thing? Nevertheless, by and by they do it, if not outwardly, as he did, at least in their vain thoughts by day, or wicked, lewd imaginations by night. So true is the wise man's saying, He that trusteth his own heart is a fool.

II. "If histories give us frequent accounts of the notorious wickedness of mankind—say the advocates for human excellence—it is because private virtue is not the subject of history; and to judge of the moral rectitude of the world by the corruption of courts, is as absurd as to

estimate the health of a people from an infirmary."

And is private vice any more the subject of history than private virtue? If it were, what folios would contain the fulsome and black accounts of all the lies and scandal—the secret grudges and open quarrels—the filthy talking and malicious jesting—the unkind or unjust behavior—the gross or refined intemperance, which deluge both town and country?

Suppose the annals of any one numerous family were published, how many volumes might be filled with the detail of the undue fondness, or forbidden coldness—the variance, animosity, and strife, which break out between husbands and wives, parents and children, brothers and sisters, masters and domestics, upper and lower servants, &c.? What ridiculous, impertinent scenes would be opened to public view! What fretfulness, dissimulation, envy, jealousy, tale-bearing, deceit! What concealed suspicions, aggravated charges, false accusations, underhand dealings, imaginary provocations, glaring partiality, insolent behavior, loud passions!

Was even the best moralist to write the memoirs of his own heart, and give the public a minute account of all his impertinent thoughts and wild imaginations, how many paragraphs would make him blush! How many pages, by presenting the astonished reader with a blank or blot, would demonstrate the truth of St. Paul's assertion, They are all gone out of the way, there is none that doeth good, none but spoils

his best works by a mixture of essential evil! Far, then, from finding* "those vastly-superior numbers, who in safe obscurity are virtuously and innocently employed," we may every-where see the truth of the confession which our objectors make in the church, "There is no health in us."

I say every-where; for is cabal confined to court, any more than lewdness to the army, and profaneness to the navy? Does not the same spirit of self-interest and intrigue which influences the choice of ministers of state, preside also at the election of members of Parliament, mayors of corporate towns, burgesses of boroughs, and petty officers in a country parish? We may, then—notwithstanding the unfortunate comparison on which this objection is founded—conclude, without absurdity, that, as all men, sooner or later, by pain, sickness, and death, evidence their natural weakness and mortality—whether they live in infirmaries, palaces, or cottages—so all men, sooner or later, by their thoughts, words, and actions, demonstrate their natural corruption, whether they crowd the jail yard, the drawing-room, or the obscure green of a country village.

III. The same objectors will probably reply: "If corruption is universal, it can not be said to be equal; for numbers lead a very harmless, and not a few a very useful life."

To this I answer, that all have naturally an evil heart of unbelief, forgetful of, and departing

* See the note on page 47.

from the living God. In this respect, there is no difference; all the world is guilty before God. But, thanks be to the Father of mercies! all do not remain so. Many cherish the seed of supernatural grace, which we have from the Redeemer; they bow to his scepter, become new creatures, depart from iniquity, and are zealous of good works. And the same gracious power that has renewed them is at work upon thousands more, hourly restraining them from much evil, and daily exciting them to many useful actions.

With respect to the harmlessness, for which some unrenewed persons are remarkable, it can not spring from a better nature than that of their fellow-mortals; for the nature of all men, like that of all wolves, is the same throughout the whole species. It must then be owing to the restraining grace of God, or to a happier constitution, a stricter education, a deeper sense of decency, or a greater regard for their character; perhaps only to the fear of consequences, and to the want of natural boldness, or of a suitable temptation and fair opportunity to sin. Nor are there few who pass for temperate, merely because the diabolical pride, lurking in their hearts, scorns to stoop so low as to indulge their beastly appetites: while others have the undeserved reputation of good-natured, because they find more delight in quietly gratifying their sheepish indolence or brutal desires, than in yielding to the uneasy, boisterous tempers, which they have in common with devils.

As to the virtues by which some of the unconverted distinguish themselves from others, they either spring from God's preventing grace or are only vices in disguise. The love of praise, the desire of honor, and the thirst of gold, excite thousands to laudable designs and useful actions. Wicked men, set on work by these powerful springs, do lying wonders in the moral world, as the magicians did in the land of Egypt. They counterfeit divine grace, and for a time seem even to outdo believers themselves. Hence it is, that we frequently see the indolent industrious, the coward brave, the covetous charitable, the Pharisee religious, the Magdalen modest, and the dastardly slave of his lusts a bold asserter of public liberty. But the Searcher of hearts is not deceived by fair appearances: he judges of their actions according to the motives whence they spring, and the ends for which they are performed. You are, says he to all these seemingly-virtuous sinners, like whited sepulchers, which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but within are full of dead men's bones and of all uncleanness.

Were I to describe these saints of the world by a comparison, I would say that some of them resemble persons who artfully conceal their ulcers, under the most agreeable appearance of cleanliness and health. Many that admire their faces and looks, little suspect what a putrid, virulent fluid runs out of their secret sores. Others of them, whose hypocrisy is not of so gross a kind, are like persons infected with a mortal

disease, who, though the mass of their blood is tainted, and some noble part attacked, still walk about, do business, and look as fresh-colored as if they were the picture of health. Ye sons of Æsculapius, who, without feeling their pulse, and carefully weighing every symptom, pronounce them very well upon their look alone, do ye not blunder in physic, just as my objectors do in divinity?

IV. But still they urge, that "it is wrong to father our sinfulness upon a pretended natural depravity, when it may be entirely owing to the force of ill example, the influence of a bad education, or the strong ferments of youthful blood."

All these, I reply, like rich soil and rank manure, cause original corruption to shoot the higher, but do not form its pernicious seeds. That these seeds lurk within the heart, before they are forced up by the heat of temptation, appears indubitable, if we consider, 1. That all children, on particular occasions, manifest some early inclinations to those sins, which the feebleness of their bodily organs, and the want of proper ferments in their blood, do not permit them to commit: 2. That infants betray envy, ill-humor, impatience, selfishness, anger, and obstinacy, even before they can take particular notice of ill examples, and understand bad counsels: and 3. That though uncleanness, fornication, and adultery, on account of the shame and danger attending them, are committed with so much secrecy, that the examples of them are seldom, if ever given in public, they are never-

theless some of the crimes which are most universally or eagerly committed.

Besides, if we were not more inclined to vice than virtue, good examples would be as common, and have as much force, as bad ones. Therefore, the generality of bad examples can not arise but from the general sinfulness of man; and to account for this general sinfulness by the generality of bad examples, is begging the question, and not proving the point.

Add to this, that as weeds, since the curse, grow even in fields sown with the best wheat, so vice, since the fall, grows in the midst of the best examples, and the most excellent education: witness the barbarous crimes committed by pious Jacob's children, and penitent Adam's eldest son.

V. "But if Cain sinned," say our objectors, "and all mankind sin also, it is no more than Adam himself once did by his own free choice, though he was created and exempt from original depravity as an angel. What need is there then to suppose, that he communicated to his posterity an inbred proneness to sin?"

To this I reply: it is not one accident or single event, but a continual repetition of the same event, that proves a proneness. If a man, who is perfectly in his senses, by some unforeseen accident falls into a fit of madness, we may account for his misfortune from that accident; and no certain judgment can be formed of the bodily habit of his family. But if all his children, through a hundred generations, are not only sub-

ject to the same mad fits, but also die in consequence of them, in all sorts of climates, and under all sorts of physicians, common sense will not allow us to doubt, that it is now a family disorder, incurable by human art. The man is Adam, the family mankind, and the madness sin. Reader, you are desired to make the application.

TWENTY-THIRD ARGUMENT.

"But all are not employed in sin and wickedness, for many go through a constant round of innocent diversions; and these, at least, must be innocent and happy." Let us then consider the amusements of mankind: or, rather, without stopping to look at the wise dance of the Israelites round the golden calf, and the modest, sober, and humane diversions of the heathens, in the festivals of their lewd, drunken, and bloody gods, let us only see how far our own pleasures demonstrate the innocence and happiness of mankind.

How excessively foolish are the plays of children! How full of mischief and cruelty the sports of boys! How vain, foppish, and frothy the joys of young people! And how much below the dignity of upright, pure creatures, the snares that persons of different sexes perpetually lay for each other! When they are together, is not this their favorite amusement, till they are deservedly caught in the net which they imprudently spread? But see them asunder.

Here, a circle of idle women, supping a decoction of Indian herbs, talk or laugh all to-

gether, like so many chirping birds or chattering monkeys, and, scandal excepted, every way to as good purpose; and there, a club of grave men blow, by the hour, clouds of stinking smoke out of their mouth, or wash it down their throat with repeated draughts of intoxicating liquors. The strong fumes have already reached their heads; and while some stagger home, others triumphantly keep the field of excess; though one is already stamped with the heaviness of the ox, another worked up to the fierceness and roar of the lion, and a third brought down to the filthiness of the vomiting dog.

Leave them at their manly sport to follow those musical sounds, mixed with a noise of stamping, and you will find others profusely perspiring, and violently fatiguing themselves, in skipping up and down a room for a whole night, and ridiculously turning their backs and faces to each other a hundred different ways. Would not a man of sense prefer running ten miles upon a useful errand, to this useless manner of losing his rest, heating his blood, exhausting his spirits, unfitting himself for the duties of the following day, and laying the foundation of a putrid fever or a consumption, by breathing the midnight air corrupted by clouds of dust, by the unwholesome fumes of candles, and by the more pernicious steam that issues from the bodies of many persons, who use a strong exercise in a confined place?

In the next room, indeed, they are more quiet; but are they more rationally employed? Why

do they so earnestly rattle those ivory cubes, and so anxiously study those packs of loose spotted leaves? Is happiness graven upon the one, or stamped upon the other? Answer, ye gamesters, who curse your stars as ye go home, with an empty purse and a heart full of rage.

"We hope there is no harm in taking an innocent game at cards," reply a ridiculous party of superannuated ladies; "gain is not our aim, we only play to kill time." You are not, then, so well employed as the foolish heathen emperor, who amused himself in killing troublesome flies and wearisome time together. The delight of rational creatures, much more of Christians on the brink of the grave, is to redeem, improve, and solidly enjoy time; but yours, alas! consists in the bare, irreparable loss of that invaluable treasure! O, what account will you give of the souls you neglect, and the talents you bury!

> And shall we kill each day! If trifling kill,
> Sure vice must butcher. O! what heaps of slain
> Call out for vengeance on us! Time destroy'd
> Is suicide, where more than blood is spilt.—YOUNG.

And are public diversions better evidences of our innocence and happiness? Let reason decide. In cities, some are lavish of the gold which should be laid by for payment of their debts, or the relief of the poor, to buy an opportunity of acting, under a mask, an impertinent or immodest part without a blush; and others are guilty of the same injustice or prodigality, that they may be entitled to the honor

of waiting upon a company of idle buffoons, and seeing them act what would make a modest woman blush, or hearing them speak what persons of true piety, or pure morals, would gladly pay them never to utter.

Are country amusements more rational and innocent? What shall we say of those Christian, or rather heathenish festivals, called wakes, annually kept in honor of the saint to whom the parish church was formally dedicated? Are they not celebrated with the idleness, vanity, and debauchery of the floralia—with the noise, riots, and frantic mirth of the bacchanals—rather than with the decent solemnity, pious cheerfulness, and strict temperance, which characterize the religion of the holy Jesus?

The assizes are held, the judge passes an awful sentence of transportation or death upon guilty wretches who stand, pale and trembling, before his tribunal; and twenty couple of gay gentlemen and ladies, as if they rejoiced in the infamy and destruction of their fellow-mortals, dance all night, perhaps in the very apartment where the distracted victims of justice a few hours before wrung their hands and rattled their irons!

The races are advertised—all the country is in motion—neither business, rain, nor storm, can prevent thousands from running for miles, and sometimes through the worst of roads, to feast their eyes upon the danger of their fellow-creatures, and divert themselves with the misery of the most useful animals. Daring mortals

hazard their necks upon swift coursers, which are tortured by the severest lashes of the whip, and incessant pricks or tearing gashes of the spur, that they may exert their utmost force, strain every nerve, and make continued efforts even beyond the powers of nature; whence—to say nothing of fatal accidents, which yet, alas! too frequently happen—they sometimes pant away their wretched lives in a bath of sweat and blood; and all this, that they may afford a barbarous pleasure to their idle, wanton, and barbarous beholders.

In one place, the inhuman sport is afforded by an unhappy bird, fixed at a distance, that the sons of cruelty may long exercise their merciless skill in its lingering and painful destruction, or by two of them trained up and high fed for the battle. The hour fixed for the obstinate engagement is come; and, as if it was not enough that they should pick other's eyes out with the strong bills that nature has given them, human malice, or rather diabolical cruelty, comes to the assistance of their native fierceness. Silver spurs, or steel talons, sharper than those of the eagle, are barbarously fastened to their feet; thus armed, they are excited to leap at each other, and, in a hundred repeated onsets, to tear their feathers and flesh as if they were contending vultures; and if, at last, one, blinded, covered with blood and wounds, and unable to stand any longer the metallic claws of his antagonist, enters into the agonies of death, the numerous ring of stamping, clapping, shouting, eagerly-betting,

or horribly-cursing spectators, is as highly delighted as if the tortured, dying creature was the common enemy of mankind.

In another place, a multitude of spectators is delightfully entertained by two brawny men, who unmercifully knock one another down, as if they were oxen appointed for the slaughter, and continue the savage play till one, with his flesh bruised and his bones shattered, bleeding and gasping as in the pangs of death, yields to his antagonist, and thus puts an end to the shocking sport.

But it is, perhaps, a different spectacle that recommends itself to the bloody taste of our baptized heathens. Fierce dogs are excited by fiercer men, with fury to fasten upon the nose, or tear out the eyes, of a poor confined animal, which pierces the sky with his painful and lamentable bellowings, enough to force compassion from the heart of barbarians not totally lost to all sense of humanity; while, in the mean time, the surrounding savage mob rend the very heavens with the most horrid imprecations and repeated shouts of applauding joy; sporting themselves with that very misery which human nature—were it not deplorably corrupted—would teach them to alleviate.*

* "I ever thought," says Judge Hale, in his Contemplations, "that there is a certain degree of justice due from man to the creatures, as from man to man; and that an excessive use of the creature's labor is an injustice for which he must account. I have, therefore, always esteemed it as a part of my duty, and it has always been my practice, to be merciful to my beasts; and upon the same ac-

These are thy favorite amusements, O England, thou center of the civilized world, where reformed Christianity, deep-thinking wisdom, and polite learning, with all its refinements, have fixed their abode! But, in the name of common sense, how can we clear them from the imputation of absurdity, folly, and madness? And by what means can they be reconciled, I will not say to the religion of the meek Jesus, but to the philosophy of a Plato, or calm reason of any thinking man? How perverted must be the taste, how irrational and cruel the diversions of barbarians in other parts of the globe! And how applicable to all the wise man's observation: "Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child, and madness in the breasts of the sons of men."

TWENTY-FOURTH ARGUMENT.

The total corruption of our nature appears not only in the inclination of mankind to pursue irrational and cruel amusements, but in their

count I have declined any cruelty to any of thy creatures, and, as much as I might, prevented it in others as a tyranny. I have abhorred those sports that consist in the torturing of thy creatures; and if any noxious creature must be destroyed, or creatures for food must be taken, it has been my practice to do it in the manner that may be with the least torture or cruelty to the creature; ever remembering, that though God has given us a dominion over his creatures, yet it is under a law of justice, prudence, and moderation; otherwise we should become tyrants and not lords over God's creatures; and therefore those things of this nature, which others have practiced as recreations, I have avoided as sins."

general propensity to commit the most unprofitable, ridiculous, inhuman, impious, and diabolical sins.

1. The most unprofitable; for instance, that of sporting in profane oaths and curses, with the tremendous name of the supreme Being. Because of swearing the land mourneth, said a prophet, thousands of years ago; and what land, even in Christendom, yea, what parish in this reformed island, mourns not, or ought not to mourn, for the same provoking crime? a crime which is the hellish offspring of practical Atheism and heathenish insolence—a crime that brings neither profit, honor, nor pleasure to the profane wretch who commits it—a crime for which he may be put to open shame, forced to appear before a magistrate, and sent for ten days to the house of correction, unless he pays an ignominious fine; and what is more awful still, a crime which, if persisted in, will one day cause him to gnaw his impious tongue in the severest torments. Surely man, who drinks this insipid, and yet destructive iniquity like water, must have his moral taste strangely vitiated, not to say diabolically perverted.

2. The most ridiculous sins. In what country, town, or village, do not women betray their silly vanity? Is it not the same foolish disposition of heart, which makes them bore their ears in Europe, and slit their noses in America, that they may unnaturally graft in their flesh pieces of glass, shining pebbles, glittering gold, or trinkets of meaner metals? And when

female Hottentots fancy they add to the importance of their filthy person by some yards of the bloody intestines of a beast twisted round their arms or necks, do they not evidence the very spirit of the ladies in our hemisphere, who too often measure their dignity by the yards of colored silk bands with which they crown themselves, and turn the grave matron into a pitiful May queen!

3. The most inhuman sins. "A hundred thousand mad animals, whose heads are covered with hats," says Voltaire, "advance to kill, or to be killed, by the like number of their fellow-mortals, covered with turbans. By this strange procedure, they want, at best, to decide whether a tract of land, to which none of them all lays any claim, shall belong to a certain man whom they call Sultan, or to another whom they name Cesar, neither of whom ever saw, or will see, the spot so furiously contended for; and very few of those creatures who thus mutually butcher one another, ever beheld the animal for whom they cut each other's throats. From time immemorial this has been the way of mankind almost over all the earth. What an excess of madness is this! And how deservedly might a superior Being crush to atoms this earthly ball, the bloody nest of such ridiculous murderers!"

The same author makes elsewhere the following reflections on the same melancholy subject. "Famine, pestilence, and war, are the three most famous ingredients of this lower world. The two first come from God; but the

last, in which all three concur, comes from the imagination of princes or ministers. A king fancies that he has a right to a distant province. He raises a multitude of men, who have nothing to do, and nothing to lose, gives them a red coat and a laced hat, and makes them wheel to the right, and wheel to the left, and march to glory. Five or six of these belligerent powers sometimes engage together, three against three, or two against four; but, whatever part they take, they all agree in one point—which is, to do their neighbor all possible mischief. The most astonishing thing belonging to their infernal undertaking is, that every ringleader of those murderers gets his colors consecrated and solemnly blessed in the name of God, before he marches up to the destruction of his fellow-creatures. If a chief warrior has had the good fortune of getting only two or three thousand men slaughtered, he does not think it worth his while to thank God for it; but if ten thousand have been destroyed by fire and sword, and if, to complete his good fortune, some capital city has been totally overthrown, a day of public thanksgiving is appointed on the joyful occasion. Is not that a fine art which carries such desolation through the earth, and, one year with another, destroys forty thousand men out of a hundred thousand!"

4. The most impious sins; for instance, that of idolatry. "Before the coming of Christ," says a late divine, "all the polite and barbarous nations among the heathens plunged into it with equal blindness. And the Jews were so

strongly wedded to it, that God's miraculous interposition, both by dreadful judgments and astonishing mercies, could not for eight hundred years restrain them from committing it in the grossest manner."

Nor need we look at either heathens or Jews, to see the proneness of mankind to that detestable crime: Christians alone can prove the charge. To this day, the greatest part of them pray to dead men and dead women, bow to images of stone and crosses of wood, and make, adore, and swallow down the wafer god; and those who pity them for this ridiculous idolatry, till converting grace interposes, daily set up their idols in their hearts, and, without going to the plain of Dura, sacrifice all to the king's golden image.

And, 5. The most diabolical sin: persecution, that favorite offspring of Satan, transformed into an angel of light. Persecution, that bloody, hypocritical monster, which carries a Bible, a liturgy, and a bundle of canons in one hand, with fire, fagots, and all the weapons invented by cruelty in the other; and with sanctified looks, distresses, racks, or murders men, either because they love God or because they can not all think alike.

Time would fail to tell of those who, on religious accounts, have been stoned and sawn asunder by the Jews, cast to the lions and burnt by the heathens, strangled and impaled by the Mohammedans, and butchered all manner of ways by the Christians.

Yes, we must confess it, Christian Rome hath glutted herself with the blood of martyrs, which heathenish Rome had but comparatively tasted; and when Protestants fled from her bloody pale, they brought along with them too much of her bloody spirit: prove the sad assertion, poor Servetus. When Romish inquisition had forced thee to fly to Geneva, what reception didst thou meet with in that reformed city? Alas! the Papists had burned thee in effigy, the Protestants burned thee in reality, and Moloch triumphed to see the two opposite parties agree in offering him the human sacrifice.

So universally restless is the spirit of persecution, which inspires the unrenewed part of mankind, that when people of the same religion have no outward opposer to tear, they bark at, bite, and devour one another. Is it not the same bitter zeal that made the Pharisees and Sadducees among the Jews, and now makes the sects of Ali and Omar among the Mohammedans, those of the Jansenists and Molinists among the Papists, and those of the Calvinists and Arminians among the Protestants, oppose each other with such acrimony and virulence?

But let us look around us at home. When persecuting Popery had almost expired in the fires in which it burned our first churchmen, how soon did those who survived them commence persecutors of the Presbyterians? When these, forced to fly to New England for rest, got there the staff of power in their hand, did they not, in their turn, fall upon, and even hang the Quakers?

And now that an act of toleration binds the monster, and the lash of pens, consecrated to the defense of our civil and religious liberties, makes him either afraid or ashamed of roaring aloud for his prey, does he not show, by his supercilious looks, malicious sneers, and settled contempt of vital piety, what he would do should an opportunity offer? And does he not still, under artful pretenses, go to the utmost length of his chain, to wound the reputation of those whom he can not devour, and inflict at least* academic death upon those whose person is happily secured from his rage?

O, ye unconverted among mankind, if all these abominations every-where break out upon you, what cages of unclean birds, what nests swarming with cruel vipers, are your deceitful and desperately-wicked hearts!

TWENTY-FIFTH ARGUMENT.

How dreadfully fallen is man, if he has not only a propensity to commit the above-mentioned sins, but to transgress the Divine commands with a variety of shocking aggravations! Yes, mankind are prone to sin:

I. Immediately, by a kind of evil instinct; as children who peevishly strike the very breast they suck, and betray the rage of their little hearts by sobbing and swelling sometimes till, by forcing their bowels out of their place, they bring a rupture upon themselves; and frequently till they are black in the face, and almost suffo-

* See Pietas Oxoniensis.

cated. II. Deliberately; as those who, having life and death clearly set before them, willfully, obstinately, choose the way that leads to certain destruction. III. Repeatedly; witness liars, who, because their crime costs them but a breath, frequently commit it at every breath. IV. Continually; as rakes, who would make their whole life one uninterrupted scene of debauchery, if their exhausted strength, or purse, did not force them to intermit their lewd practices, though not without a promise to renew them again at the first convenient opportunity. V. Treacherously; as those Christians who forget Divine mercies, and their own repeated resolutions, break through the solemn vows and promises made in their sacraments, and, sinning with a high hand against their profession, perfidiously fly in the face of their conscience, the Church, and their Savior. VI. Daringly; as those who steal under the gallows, openly insult their parents or their king, laugh at all laws, human and divine, and put at defiance all that are invested with power to see them executed. VII. Triumphantly; as the vast number of those who glory in their shame, sound aloud the trumpet of their own wickedness, and boast of their horrid, repeated debaucheries, as admirable and praiseworthy deeds. VIII. Progressively; till they have filled up the measure of their iniquities, as individuals; witness Judas, who, from covetousness, proceeded to hypocrisy, theft, treason, despair, and self-murder; or, as a nation, witness the Jews, who, after despising

and killing their prophets, rejected the Son of God, affirmed he was mad, stigmatized him with the name of deceiver, said he was Beelzebub himself, offered him all manner of indignities, bought his blood, prayed it might be on them and their children, rested not till they had put the Prince of Life to the most ignominious death, and, horrible to say! made sport with the groans which rent the rocks around them, and threw the earth into convulsions under their feet. IX. Unnaturally; 1. By astonishing barbarities, as the women who murder their own children, the Greeks and Romans, who exposed them to be the living prey of wild beasts, the savages, who knock their aged parents on the head, the cannibals, who roast and eat their prisoners of war, and some revengeful people, who, to taste all the sweetness of their devilish passion, have murdered their enemy, and eaten up his liver and heart. 2. By the most diabolical superstitions; as the Israelites, who, when they had learned the works of the heathens, sacrificed their sons and their daughters to devils, and, by the horrible practices of witchcraft, endeavored to raise, and deal with infernal spirits; and 3. By the most preposterous gratification of sense; witness the incests* and rapes com-

* The reason which engaged the publisher of these sheets to preach to some of the colliers in his neighborhood, was the horrid length they went in immorality. One of them, whose father was hanged, upon returning himself from transportation, in cold blood, attempted to ravish his own daughter in the presence of his own wife, and was just prevented from completing his crime, by the ut-

mitted in this land, the infamous fires which drew fire and brimstone down from heaven upon accursed cities, and the horrid lusts of the Canaanites—though, alas! not confined to Canaan—which gave birth to the laws recorded, Lev. xviii, 7, 23, and xx, 16*—laws that are at once the disgrace of mankind, and the proof of my assertion. X. What is most astonishing of all, by apostasy; as those who, having begun in the spirit, and tasted the bitterness of repentance, the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, make shipwreck of the faith, deny the Lord that bought them, account the blood of the covenant, wherewith they were sanctified, an unholy thing, and so scandalously end in the flesh that they are justly compared to trees withered, plucked up by the roots, twice dead, and to raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever.

Good God! what line can fathom an abyss of corruption, the overflowings of which are more or less attended with these multiplied and shocking aggravations?

TWENTY-SIXTH ARGUMENT.

If the force of a torrent may be known by the

most exertion of the united strength of the mother and the child. When brutish ignorance and heathenish wickedness break out into such unnatural enormities, who would not break through the hedge of canonical regularity!

* In the last century, an Irish bishop was clearly convicted of the crime forbidden in those laws, and suffered death for it.

hight and number of the banks which it overflows, the strength of this corruption will be rightly estimated from the high and numerous dikes raised to stem it, which it nevertheless continually breaks through.

Ignorance and debauchery, injustice and impiety, in all their shapes, still overspread the whole earth, notwithstanding innumerable means used in all ages to suppress and prevent them.

The almost total extirpation of mankind by the deluge, the fiery showers that consumed Sodom, the ten Egyptian plagues, the entire excision of whole nations who were once famous for their wickedness, the captivities of the Jews, the destruction of thousands of cities and kingdoms, and millions of more private judgments, never fully stopped immorality in any one country.

The striking miracles wrought by prophets, the alarming sermons preached by divines, the infinite number of good books published in almost all languages, and the founding of myriads of churches, religious houses, schools, colleges, and universities, have not yet caused impiety to hide its brazen face any where. The making of all sorts of excellent laws, the appointing of magistrates and judges to put them in force, the forming of associations, for the reformation of manners, the filling of thousands of prisons, and erecting of millions of racks and gallows, have not yet suppressed one vice.

And what is most amazing of all, the life, miracles, sufferings, death, and heavenly doctrine of the Son of God; the labors, writings,

and martyrdom of his disciples; the example and entreaties of millions that have lived and died in the faith; the inexpressible horrors and frightful warnings of thousands of wicked men, who have testified in their last moments, that they had worked out their damnation, and were just going to their own place; the blood of myriads of martyrs, the strivings of the Holy Spirit, the dreadful curses of the law, and the glorious promises of the Gospel—all these means together have not extirpated immorality and profaneness out of one single town or village in all the world; no, nor out of one single family for any length of time. And this will probably continue to be the desperate case of mankind, till the Lord lays to his powerful hand; seconds these means by the continued strokes of the sword of his Spirit; pleads by fire and sword with all flesh, and, according to his promise, causes righteousness to cover the earth, as the waters cover the sea.

Is not this demonstration founded on matter of fact, that human corruption is not only deep as the ocean, but impetuous as an overflowing river, which breaks down all its banks, and leaves marks of devastation in every place? This will still appear in a clearer light, if we consider the strong opposition which our natural depravity makes to divine grace in the unconverted.

TWENTY-SEVENTH ARGUMENT.

When the Lord, by the rod of affliction, the sword of the Spirit, and the power of his grace,

attacks the hard heart of a sinner, how obstinately does he resist the sharp, though gracious operation! To make an honorable and vigorous defense, he puts on the shining robes of his formality; he stands firm in the boasted armor of his moral powers; he daubs with untempered mortar the ruinous wall of his conduct; with self-righteous resolutions, and pharisaic professions of virtue, he builds, as he thinks, an impregnable tower; musters and draws up in battle array his poor works, artfully putting in the front those that make the finest appearance, and carefully concealing the vices which he can neither disguise nor dress up in the regimentals of virtue.

In the mean time he prepares the carnal weapons of his warfare, and raises the battery of a multitude of objections to silence the truth that begins to gall him. He affirms "the preachers of it are deceivers and madmen," till he sees the Jews and heathens fixed even upon Christ and St. Paul the very same opprobrious names; he calls it a "new doctrine," till he is obliged to acknowledge that it is as old as the reformers, the apostles, and the prophets; he says "it is fancy, delusion, enthusiasm," till the blessed effects of it on true believers constrain him to drop the trite and slanderous assertion; he declares that "it drives people out of their senses, or makes them melancholy," till he is compelled to confess that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and that none are so happy and joyful as those who truly love and zealously

serve God; he urges that "it destroys good works," till a sight of the readiness of believers, and of his own backwardness to perform them, makes him ashamed of the groundless accusation; he will tell you twenty times over, "there is no need of so much ado," till he discovers the folly of being careless on the brink of eternal ruin, and observes that the nearness of temporal danger puts him upon the utmost exertion of all his powers. Perhaps, to get himself a name among his profane companions, he lampoons the Scriptures, or casts out firebrands and arrows against the despised disciples of Jesus: "They are all poor, illiterate," says he, "fools or knaves, cheats and hypocrites," etc., till the word of God stops his mouth, and he sees himself the greatest hypocrite with whom he is acquainted.

When by such heavy charges he has long kept off the truth from his heart, and the servants of God from his company, this kind of ammunition begins to fail; and he barricades himself with the fear of being undone in his circumstances, till experience convinces him that no good thing shall God withhold from them that live a godly life, and that all things shall be added to them who seek first the kingdom of God. He then hides himself in the crowd of the ungodly, and says, "if he perishes, many will share the same fate," till he sees the glaring absurdity of going to hell for the sake of company. He shelters, at last, under the protection of the rich, the great, the learned despisers of Christ and the cross,

till the minds of their wickedness springing on all sides around him, makes him fly to the sanctuary of the Lord; and there he sees the ways and understands the end of these men.

When all his batteries are silenced, and a breach is made in his conscience, he looks out for some secret way to leave Sodom, without being taken notice of, and derided by those who fight under Satan's banner; and the fear of being taken for one of them that fly from the wrath to come, and openly take the part of a holy God against a sinful world, pierces him through with many sorrows.

Are the outworks taken, has he been forced to part with his gross immoralities, he has generally recourse to a variety of stratagems. Sometimes he publicly dismisses Satan's garrison—fleshly lusts which war against the godly, and keep under the ungodly soul; but it is only to let them in again secretly, either one by one or with forces seven times greater, so that his last state is worse than the first. At other times he hoists up the white flag of truth, apparently yields to conviction, favors the ministers of the Gospel, admits the language of Canaan, and warmly contends for evangelical doctrines; but, alas! the place has not surrendered, his heart is not given up to God; spiritual wickedness, under fair shows of zeal, still keeps possession for the god of this world; and the shrewd hypocrite artfully imitates the behavior of a true Israelite, just as Satan transforms himself to an angel of light.

Is he at last deeply convinced, that the only means of escaping destruction and capitulating to advantage is, to deliver up the traitor sin! Yet what a long parley does he hold about it! What a multitude of plausible reasons does he advance to put it off from day to day! "He is yet young—the Lord is merciful—all have their foibles—we are here in an imperfect state—it is a little sin—it may be consistent with loyalty to God—it hurts nobody but himself—many pious men were once guilty of it—by and by he will repent as they did," etc. When louder summons and increasing fears compel him to renounce the lusts of the flesh, how strongly does he plead for those of the mind! And after he has given up his bosom sin with his lips, how treacherously does he hide it in the inmost recesses of his heart!

Never did a besieged town dispute the ground with such obstinacy, and hold out by such a variety of stratagems, as corrupt man stands it out against the repeated attacks of truth and grace. If he yields at all, it is seldom before he is brought to the greatest extremity. He feeds on the dust of the earth: he tries to fill his soul with the husks of vanity, and fares hard on sounds, names, forms, opinions, withered experience, dry notions of faith, and empty professions of hope, and fawning shows of love, till the mighty famine arises, and the intolerable want of substantial bread forces him to surrender at discretion, and without reserve.

Some stand it out thus against the God of

their salvation ten or twenty years; and others never yield till the terrors of death storm their affrighted souls, their last sickness batters down their tortured bodies, and the poison of the arrows of the Almighty drinks up their wasted spirits. What a strong proof is this of the inveteracy and the obstinacy of our corruption!

TWENTY-EIGHTH ARGUMENT.

But a still stronger may be drawn from the amazing struggles of God's children with their depravity, even after they have, through grace, powerfully subdued, and gloriously triumphed over it. Their Redeemer himself is the Captain of their salvation; they are embarked with him and bound for heaven; they look at the compass of God's word; they hold the rudder of sincerity; they crowd all the sails of their good resolutions, and pious affections, to catch the gales of Divine assistance; they exhort one another daily, to ply the oars of faith and prayer with watchful industry; tears of deep repentance and fervent desire often bedew their faces in the pious toil; they would rather die than draw back to perdition; but, alas! the stream of corruption is so impetuous, that it often prevents their making any sensible progress in their spiritual voyage; and if in an unguarded hour they drop the oar, and faint in the work of faith, the patience of hope, or the labor of love, they are presently carried down into the dead sea of religious formality, or the whirlpools of scandalous wickedness. Witness the lukewarmness of the

Laodiceans—the adultery of David—the perjury of Peter—the final apostasy of Judas, and the shameful flight of all the disciples.

TWENTY-NINTH ARGUMENT.

When evidences of the most opposite interest agree in their deposition of a matter of fact, its truth is greatly corroborated. To the last argument, taken from some sad experiences of God's people, I shall, therefore, add one drawn from the religious rites of Paganism, the confessions of ancient heathens, and the testimony of modern Deists.

When the heathens made their temples stream with the blood of slaughtered hecatombs, did they not often explicitly deprecate the wrath of Heaven and impending destruction? And was it not a sense of their guilt and danger, and a hope that the punishment they deserved might be transferred to their bleeding victims, which gave birth to their numerous expiatory and propitiatory sacrifices? If this must be granted, it is plain those sacrifices were so many proofs that the considerate heathens were not utter strangers to their corruption and danger.

But let them speak their own sentiments Not to mention their allegorical fables of Prometheus, who brought a curse upon earth by stealing fire out of heaven, and of Pandora, whose fatal curiosity let all sorts of woes and diseases loose upon mankind, does not Ovid, in his Metamorphoses, give a striking account of the fall and its dreadful consequences? Read

his description of the golden age, and you see Adam in Paradise; proceed to the iron age, and you behold the horrid picture of our consummate wickedness.

If the ancients had no idea of that native propensity to evil which we call original depravity, what did Plato mean by our natural wickedness?* And Pythagoras, by the fatal companion, the noxious strife that lurks within us, and was born along with us?† Did not Solon take for his motto the well-known saying which, though so much neglected now, was formerly written in golden capitals over the door of Apollo's temple at Delphos, Know thyself?‡ Are we not informed by the heathen historians that Socrates, the prince of the Greek sages, acknowledged he was naturally prone to the grossest vices? Does not Seneca, the best of the Roman philosophers, observe, We are born in such a condition, that we are not subject to fewer disorders of the mind than of the body?§ Yea, that all vices are in all men, though they do not break out in every one:‖ and that to confess them is the beginning of our cure?¶ And had not Cicero lamented

* *Kakia en phusei.* Hence that excellent definition of true religion. *Therapeia psuches.* The cure of a diseased soul.

† *Eurethre gar sunopados eris blaptousa leletheu. Sumphtuos.* Aur. Carm.

‡ *Gnothi seauton.*

§ Hac conditione nati sumus. Animalia obnoxia non paucioribus animi quam corporis morbis.

‖ Omnia in omnibus vitia sunt, sed non omnia in singulis extant.

¶ Vitia sua confiteri sanitatis principium est.

before Seneca, that men are brought into life by nature as a step-mother, with a naked, frail, and infirm body, and a soul prone to divers lusts?

Even some of the sprightliest poets bear their testimony to the mournful truth I contend for. Propertius could say, Every body has a vice to which he is inclined by nature.* Horace declared, that no man is born free from vices, and that he is the best man who is oppressed with the least;† that mankind rush into wickedness, and always desire what is forbidden;‡ that youth hath the softness of wax to receive vicious impressions, and the hardness of a rock to resist virtuous admonitions;§ in a word; that we are mad enough to attack heaven itself, and that our repeated crimes do not suffer the God of heaven to lay by his wrathful thunderbolts.‖

And Juvenal, as if he had understood what St. Paul says of the carnal mind, affirms that nature, unchangeably fixed, tends, yea, runs back to wickedness, as bodies to their center.¶

Thus the very depositions of the heathens, in their lucid intervals, as well as their sacrifices, prove the depravity and danger of mankind.

* Unicuique dedit vitium natura creato.

† Nam vitiis nemo sine nascitur, optimus ille est,
Qui minimis urgetur.

‡ Gens humana ruit per vetitum nefas,
Nitimur in vetitum semper cupimusque negata.

§ Cereus in vitium flecti, monitoribus asper.

‖ Cœlum ipsum petimus stultitia; neque
Per nostrum patimur scelus
Iracunda Jovem ponere fulmina.

¶ Ad mores natura recurrit
Damnatos, fixa et mutari nescia.

And so does likewise the testimony of some of our modern Deistical philosophers.

The ingenious author of a book called Philosophical Inquiries concerning the Americans, informs us, it is a custom among some Indians, that as soon as the wife is delivered of a child, the husband must take to his bed, where he is waited on by the poor woman who should have been brought there; and that to this day, the same ridiculous custom prevails in some parts of France. "From this and other instances," says our Inquirer, "we may collect that, however men may differ in other points, there is a most striking conformity among them in *absurdity*."

The same philosopher, who is by no means tainted with what some persons are pleased to call enthusiasm, confirms the doctrine of our natural depravity by the following anecdote, and the ironical observation with which it is closed. The Esquimaux—the wildest and most sottish people in all America—call themselves men, and all other nations barbarians. "Human vanity, we see, thrives equally well in all climates; in Labrador, as in Asia. Beneficent nature has dealt out as much of this comfortable quality to a Greenlander, as to the most consummate French petit maitre."

The following testimony is so much the more striking, as it comes from one of the greatest poets, philosophers, and Deists, of this present free-thinking age. "Who can without horror consider the whole earth as the empire of de-

struction! It abounds in wonders, it abounds also in victims; it is a vast field of carnage and contagion. Every species is, without pity, pursued and torn to pieces through the earth, and air, and water. In man there is more wretchedness than in all other animals put together; he smarts continually under two scourges, which other animals never feel—anxiety, and a listlessness in appetence, which makes him weary of himself. He loves life, and yet he knows that he must die. If he enjoys some transient good, for which he is thankful to heaven, he suffers various evils, and is at last devoured by worms. This knowledge is his fatal prerogative: other animals have it not. He feels it every moment rankling and corroding in his breast. Yet he spends the transient moment of his existence in diffusing the misery that he suffers—in cutting the throats of his fellow-creatures for pay—in cheating and being cheated—in robbing and being robbed—in serving that he may command, and in repenting of all that he does. The bulk of mankind are nothing more than a crowd of wretches, equally criminal and unfortunate, and the globe contains rather carcasses than men. I tremble, upon a review of this dreadful picture, to find that it implies a complaint against Providence, and I wish that I had never been born."—*Voltaire's Gospel of the Day.**

* Wild error is often the guide, and glaring contradiction the badge, both of those who reject revelation, like Voltaire, and of those who indirectly set aside one-half of it, like the Pharisees and Antinomians around us. See a

THIRTIETH ARGUMENT.

And yet, O strange infatuation! vain man will be wise, and wicked man pretends to be righteous! Far from repenting in the dust, he pleads his innocence, and claims the rewards

striking proof of it. This very author, in another book—O! see what antichristian morality comes to—represents the horrible sin of Sodom as an excusable mistake of nature, and assures us, that, "At the worst of times, there is at most upon the earth, one man in a thousand that can be called wicked." Now for the proof! "Hardly do we see one of those enormous crimes that shock human nature committed in ten years, at Rome, Paris, or London, those cities where the thirst of gain, which is the parent of all crimes, is carried to the highest pitch. If men were essentially wicked, we should find every morning husbands murdered by their wives, etc., as we do hens killed by foxes." According to this apostle of the Deistical world, it seems, that the most intense thirst of gold is no degree of wickedness; that a woman to be very good, needs only not to cut her husband's throat while he is asleep; and that it even little matters whether she omits the dire murder out of regard to his life, or her own. What moral philosophy is here! Why, if the sin of Sodom is a peccadillo, or frolicsome mistake, and nothing is wickedness but a treacherous cutting of a husband's or a parent's throat, I extend my charity four times beyond thee, O Voltaire, and do maintain that there is not one wicked man in five thousand.

I insert this note to obviate the charges of severe critics, who accuse me of dealing in "gross misrepresentations, false quotations, and forgeries," because I quote some authors, when they speak as the oracles of God; and do not swell my book with their inconsistencies, when they contradict the Scriptures, reason, and the truths which they themselves have advanced in some happy moments; and because I can not force my reason to maintain with them both sides of a glaring contradiction.

O, ye Deistical moralists, let me meet with more candor, justice, and mercy from you, than I have done from the

of imaginary merit! Incredible as the assertion is, a thousand witnesses are ready to confirm it.

Come forth, ye natural sons of virtue, who, with scornful boasts, attack the doctrine of man's depravity! To drown the whispers of reason and experience, sound each your own trumpet—thank God you "are not as other men"—inform us you "have a good heart" and "a clear conscience;" assure us, you "do your duty, your endeavors, your best endeavors," to please the Author of your lives; vow, you "never were guilty of any crime, never did any harm;" and tell us, you hope to mount to heaven, on the strong pinions of your "good works and pious resolutions."

When you have thus acted the Pharisee's part before your fellow-creatures, go to your Creator, and assume the character of the publican. Confess with your lips, you are miserable sinners, who have done what you ought not to have done, and left undone what you ought to have done. Protest, there is no health in you; complain that the remembrance of your sins is grievous to you, and the burden of them intolerable. But remember, O ye self-righteous formalists, that by this glaring inconsistency you give the strongest proof of your unrighteousness. You are, nevertheless, modest, when

warm opposers of the second Gospel axiom. It is enough that you discard Scripture; do not, like them, make it a part of your orthodoxy to murder reason, and kick common sense out of doors.

compared with your brethren of the Romish Church.

These, far from thinking themselves unprofitable servants, fancy they are literally righteous over much. Becoming merit-mongers, they make a stock of their works of supererogation, set up shop with the righteousness they can spare to others, and expose to sale indulgences and pardons out of their pretended treasury. Nor are there wanting sons of Simon, who, with ready money, purchase, as they think, not livings in the Church below, but, which is far preferable, seats in the Church above, and good places at the heavenly court.

Was ever a robe of righteousness—I had almost said a fool's coat—so coarsely woven by the slaves of imposture and avarice! And so dearly bought by the sons of superstition and credulity!

O, ye spiritual Ethiopians, who paint yourselves all over with the corroding white of hypocrisy, and, after all, are artful enough to lay on red paint, and imitate the blush of humble modesty—ye that borrow virtue's robes to procure admiration, and put on religion's cloak to hide your shameful deformity—ye that deal in external righteousness, to carry on with better success the most sordid of all trades, that of sin; of the worst of sins, pride; of the worst of pride, which is spiritual—ye numerous followers of those whom the prophet of Christians called crafty serpents, and soft brood of vipers—ye to whom he declared that publicans and harlots

shall enter into the kingdom of heaven before you; if I call you in last to prove the desperate wickedness of the human heart, it is not because I esteem you the weakest advocates of the truth I contend for, but because you really are the strongest of my witnesses.

And now, candid reader, forget not plain matter of fact, recollect the evidence given by reason, pass sentence upon these last arguments which I have offered to thy consideration, and say, whether man's disposition and conduct to his Creator, his fellow-creatures, and himself, do not abundantly prove that he is by nature in a fallen and lost estate.

FOURTH PART.

The preceding arguments recommend themselves to the common sense of thinking heathens, and the conscience of reasonable Deists, as being all taken from those two amazing volumes, which are open and legible to all—the world and man. The following are taken from a third volume, the Bible, despised by the wits of the age, merely because they study and understand it even less than the other two. "The Bible!" says one of them with a smile, "save yourself the trouble of producing arguments drawn from that old legend, unless you first demonstrate its authenticity by the noble faculty to which you appeal in these pages." For the sake of such

objectors, I here premise, by way of digression, a few rational arguments to evince, as far as my contracted plan will allow, the Divine authority of the Scriptures.

1. The sacred penmen, the prophets, and apostles, were holy, excellent men, and would not—artless, illiterate men, and therefore could not—lay the horrible scheme of deluding mankind. The hope of gain did not influence them, for they were self-denying men, that left all to follow a Master, who had not where to lay his head, and whose grand initiating maxim was, Except a man forsake all that he hath he can not be my disciple. They were so disinterested, that they secured nothing on earth but hunger and nakedness, stocks and prisons, racks and tortures; which, indeed, was all that they could or did expect in consequence of Christ's express declarations. Neither was a desire of honor the motive of their actions; for the Lord himself was treated with the utmost contempt, and had more than once assured them that they should certainly share the same fate; besides, they were humble men, not above working as mechanics for a coarse maintenance, and so little desirous of human regard, that they exposed to the world the meanness of their birth and occupations, their great ignorance and scandalous falls.

Add to this, that they were so many, and lived at such distance of time and place from each other, that, had they been impostors, it would have been impracticable for them to contrive

and carry on a forgery without being detected. And as they neither would nor could deceive the world, so they neither could nor would be deceived themselves; for they were days, months, and years, eye and ear witnesses of the things which they relate; and when they had not the fullest evidence of important facts, they insisted upon new proofs, and even upon sensible demonstrations: as, for instance, Thomas, in the matter of our Lord's resurrection, John xx, 25. And to leave us no room to question their sincerity, most of them joyfully sealed the truth of their doctrines with their own blood. Did so many and such marks of veracity ever meet in any other authors?

2. But even while they lived, they confirmed their testimony by a variety of miracles, wrought in divers places, and for a number of years; sometimes before thousands of their enemies, as the miracles of Christ and his disciples; sometimes before hundreds of thousands, as those of Moses. These miracles were so well known and attested, that when both Christ and Moses appealed to their authenticity, before their bitterest opposers, mentioning the persons upon whom, as well as the particular times when, and the places where, they had been performed, the facts were never denied, but passed over in silence, or maliciously attributed to the prince of the devils. By such a pitiful slander as this, Porphyry, Hierocles, Celsus, and Julian, the Apostate, those learned and inveterate enemies of Christianity, endeavored—as the Pharisees

had done before them—to sap the argument founded upon the miracles of Christ and his disciples. So sure, then, as God would never have displayed his arm in the most* astonishing manner for the support of imposture, the sacred penmen had their commission from the Almighty, and their writings are his lively oracles.

3. Reason itself dictates that nothing but the plainest matter of fact could induce so many thousands of prejudiced and persecuting Jews to embrace the humbling, self-denying doctrine of the cross, which they so much despised and abhorred. Nothing but the clearest evidence, arising from undoubted truth, could make multitudes of lawless, luxurious heathens, receive, follow, and transmit to posterity, the doctrine and writings of the apostles; especially at a time when the vanity of their pretensions to miracles, and the gift of tongues, could be so easily discovered, had they been impostors—at a time when the profession of Christianity exposed persons of all ranks to the greatest contempt, and most imminent danger. In this respect the case of the primitive Christians widely differed from that of Mohammed's followers; for those who

* Once, indeed, the Lord permitted the magicians of Egypt so to use their art, as to counterfeit, for a time, some of Moses' miracles; but it was only to make the authenticity of others more conspicuous; this being the happy effect of the contest, when those ministers of Satan withdrew confounded, and were forced to acknowledge that the finger of God was evidently displayed through the rod of their antagonist.

adhered to the warlike, violent impostor, saved their lives and properties, or attained to honor by their new, easy, and flesh-pleasing religion: but those who devoted themselves to the meek, self-denying, crucified Jesus, were frequently spoiled of their goods, and cruelly put to death; or, if they escaped with their lives, were looked upon as the very dregs of mankind.

Add to this, that some of the most profound parts of the Scriptures were addressed to the inhabitants of polite Greece, and triumphant Rome, among* whom philosophy and literature, with the fine arts, and the sciences, were in the highest perfection, and who, consequently, were less liable to be the dupes of forgery and imposture. On the contrary, gross ignorance overspread those countries where Mohammed first broached his absurd opinions, and propa-

* Not many noble, not many wise are called, says the apostle; nevertheless, some of both, even at the rise of Christianity, openly stood up for its truth. Among the noble we find Joseph, a member of the great Jewish council; Dionysius, one of the judges at Athens; and Flavius Clemens, a Roman senator; and among the wise, Quadratus, Aristides, and Athenagoras, Athenian philosophers; Clemens, Arnobius, Ammonius, Annatolius, etc., men of great learning at Alexandria; and at Rome, Justin Martyr and Tertullian, both famous apologists for the religion of Jesus; the latter of whom, in the second century, told the Roman governors, that their corporations, councils, and armies, and the Emperor's palace, were full of Christians; nor is this improbable, since so early as St. Paul's days the saints of Cæsar's household saluted those of the Roman provinces, Phil. iv, 22. How credulous are they who can believe that persons of such rank and learning could be deluded by Jewish fishermen into the worship of a crucified impostor!

gated them with the sword; a sure sign this, that the sacred writers did not, like that impostor, avail themselves of the ignorance, weakness, and helplessness of their followers, to impose falsehood upon them.

4. When the authenticity of the miracles was attested by thousands of living witnesses, religious rites were instituted and performed by hundreds of thousands, agreeable to Scripture injunctions, in order to perpetuate that authenticity. And these solemn ceremonies have ever since been kept up in all parts of the world; the passover by the Jews, in remembrance of Moses' miracles in Egypt; and the eucharist by Christians, as a memorial of Christ's death, and the miracles that accompanied it, some of which are recorded by Phlegon the Trallian, a heathen historian.

5. The Scriptures have not only the external sanction of miracles, but the internal stamp of the omniscient God by a variety of prophecies, some of which have already been most exactly confirmed by the event predicted; witness the rise and fall of the four grand monarchies according to Daniel's prophecy, chapters ii and vii, and the destruction of the city and temple of Jerusalem, foretold by Christ, Matt. xxiv, 2; while others are every day fulfilled in the face of infidels, particularly the persecution of the real disciples of Christ in our times, as well as in all ages, see Matt. x, 22, 35, John xv, 20, and Gal. iv, 29; and the present miserable state of the Jews, so exactly described by Moses

above three thousand years ago; see Deut. xxviii, 65.

6. Sometimes the plainest prophecies, the most public miracles, and the annals of kingdoms, well known when those books were first received, wonderfully concur to demonstrate their authenticity. Take one instance out of many. A prophet out of Judah, above three hundred years before the event, thus foretold the pollution of Jeroboam's altar at Bethel, before Jeroboam himself, who was attended by his priests, his courtiers, and no doubt a vast number of idolatrous worshipers: O altar, altar, thus saith the Lord, Behold, a child shall be born unto the house of David, Josiah by name, who shall burn men's bones upon thee; and this is the sign: Behold, this very day, the altar shall be rent, and the ashes that are upon it scattered. King Jeroboam, inflamed with anger, stretched forth his hand against the man of God, saying to his guards, Lay hold on him; but his extended hand was dried up so that he could not pull it in again to him: the rending of the altar, and scattering of the fire, instantly took place; and the capital prophecy was exactly fulfilled by pious king Josiah, as you may see by comparing 1 Kings xiii, 1, etc., with 2 Kings xxiii, 15, etc. Can we reasonably suppose, that books containing accounts of such public events, would have been received as divine by a divided people, if their authenticity had not been confirmed by indubitable matter of fact? Nay, is it not

as absurd to assert it, as it would be to affirm that the offices for the 5th of November, and the 30th of January, were forged by crafty priests; and that the Papists, Puritans, and Royalists of the last century, agreed to impose upon the world the history of the gunpowder plot, and of King Charles' decollation, with which those parts of our liturgy are so inseparably connected?

7. This scattered, despised people, the irreconcilable enemies of the Christians, keep, with amazing care,* the Old Testament, full of the prophetic history of Jesus Christ, and by that means afford the world a striking proof that the New Testament is true, and Christians in their turn show, that the Old Testament is abundantly confirmed and explained by the New. The

* If the histories contained in the Old Testament were, in general, for the credit of the Jews, the love of praise might, indeed, have engaged some of them to join in a public forgery. But that book, of which they have always been so tenacious, presents the world chiefly with an account of their monstrous ingratitude, unparalleled obstinacy, perpetual rebellions, abominable idolatries, and of the fearful judgments which their wickedness brought upon them. Moses, who leads the van of their sacred authors, sums up his history of the Israelites, and draws up their character in these disgraceful words, which he spoke to their face: You have been rebellious against the Lord from the day that I knew you, Deut. ix, 24. And even David and Solomon, their greatest kings, are represented in those books as guilty of the greatest enormities. O ye Deists, I appeal to your reason, and ask, Would you die for, would you even connive at, a notorious forgery, supposing the design of it were merely to impose upon the world as divine, a book that should perpetually stigmatize your ancestors, and fix horrid blots upon the names for which you have the greatest veneration?

Earl of Rochester, the great wit of the last century, was so struck with this proof, that upon reading the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, with floods of penitential tears he lamented his former infidelity, and warmly embraced the faith which he had so publicly ridiculed.

8. To say nothing of the venerable antiquity, and the wonderful preservation of those books, some of which are by far the most ancient in the world—to pass over the inimitable simplicity, or true sublimity of their style, they carry with them such characters of truth as command the respect of every unprejudiced reader.

They open to us the mystery of the creation, the nature of God, angels, and man, the immortality* of the soul, the end for which we were made, the origin and connection of moral and natural evil, the vanity of this world and the glory of the next. There we see inspired shepherds, tradesmen, and fishermen, surpassing as much the greatest philosophers as these did the herd of mankind, both in meekness of wisdom and sublimity of doctrine—there we admire the purest morality in the world, agreeable to the dictates of sound reason, confirmed by the witness which God has placed for himself in our breast, and exemplified in the lives of men of like passions with ourselves—there we discover

* It is remarkable that the wisest heathens, with all their philosophy, seldom attained to a full assurance of the immortality of the soul. Cicero himself says: Nescio quomodo dum lego assentior; cum posui librum, et mecum ipse de immortalitate animorum cœpi cogitare assentio omnis illa elabitur.—*Tusc. Quæst., lib.* 1.

a vein of ecclesiastical history and theological truth, consistently running through a collection of sixty-six different books, written by various authors in different languages, during the space of above fifteen hundred years—there we find, as in a deep and pure spring, all the genuine drops and streams of spiritual knowledge which can possibly be met with in the largest libraries—there the workings of the human heart are described, in a manner that demonstrates the inspiration of the Searcher of hearts—there we have a particular account of all our spiritual maladies, with their various symptoms, and the method of a certain cure, a cure that has been witnessed by millions of martyrs and departed saints, and is now enjoyed by thousands of good men, who would account it an honor to seal the truth of the Scriptures with their own blood—there you meet with the noblest strains of penitential and joyous devotion, adapted to the dispositions and states of all travelers to Sion—and there you read those awful threatenings and cheering promises which are daily fulfilled in the consciences of men, to the admiration of believers, and the astonishment of attentive infidels.

9. The wonderful efficacy of the Scriptures is another proof that they are of God. When they are faithfully opened by his ministers, and powerfully applied by his Spirit, they wound and heal, they kill and make alive, they alarm the careless, turn or enrage the wicked, direct the lost, support the tempted, strengthen the weak,

comfort mourners, and nourish pious souls. As the woman of Samaria said of Jesus, Come, see a man that told me all that ever I did: Is not this the Christ? a good man can say of the Bible, "Come, see a book that told me all that was in my heart, and acquainted me with the various trials and dangers I have met with in my spiritual travels—a book where I have found those truths which, like a divinely-tempered sword, have cut my way through all the snares and forces of my spiritual adversaries, and by whose directions my soul has happily entered the paradise of divine and brotherly love. Is not this the book of God?"

10. To conclude: it is exceedingly remarkable, that the more humble and holy people are, the more they read, admire, and value the Scriptures, and, on the contrary, the more self-conceited, worldly-minded, and wicked, the more they neglect, despise, and asperse them.

As for the objections which are raised against their perspicuity and consistency, those who are both pious and learned, know that they are generally founded on prepossession, and the want of understanding in spiritual things; or on our ignorance of several customs, idioms, and circumstances, which were perfectly known when those books were written. Frequently, also, the immaterial error arises merely from a wrong punctuation, or a mistake of copiers, printers, or translators; as the daily discoveries of pious critics, and ingenuous confessions of unprejudiced inquirers, abundantly prove.

To the preceding arguments I beg leave to add the following queries. Do not disbelievers, by supposing that the Scriptures are a forged book, and, consequently, that Christianity is a false religion, run upon the very rocks which they seem so afraid of? And may they not be charged with indirectly setting their seal to opinions far more incredible than those which they reject?

1. O, ye disputers of this world, if ye believe that Moses and Jesus Christ, St. Peter and St. Paul, publicly worked sham miracles for years, in various cities and countries, before thousands of their sharp-sighted opposers, without ever being detected in any of their tricks, might you not as reasonably believe that thousands of shrewd men were once turned into stupid asses?

2. If you believe that the Gospel is the production of human deceit, and yet that in the prodigious number of apostates once concerned in carrying on the amazing villainy, such as Judas, Demas, Simon Magus, Alexander the coppersmith, who did St. Paul much evil, etc., not one was ever found that would prove the forgery, might you not as reasonably believe that if Mr. Wilkes, and all his friends, knew of a gross villainy carried on by the ministry, in order to turn the kingdom upside down, neither he nor any one of them could ever be prevailed upon to disclose and prove it to the world?*

* Pliny, a learned and prudent Roman governor, who was employed by the Emperor Trajan in stopping the progress of Christianity, wrote to him, that the apostates

3. You believe that the miracles and resurrection of Christ, together with the gifts of the Holy Ghost, were nothing but enthusiastical or knavish pretensions; and yet you are forced to grant, that thousands of Jews, strongly attached to their religion, amazingly averse to that of Jesus, and guilty of persecuting him to death, took him openly for their Savior a few weeks after they had seen him publicly scourged, and in the very city in sight of which he had just been crucified between two thieves. Now, is not this as absurd as to believe, that if a few fishermen cried up the last person hanged in London for a notorious forgery, and if they affirmed that he was the Son of God, appealing to a great number of miracles, supposed to have been wrought by him in the squares and hospitals of the metropolis, and especially in St. Paul's church-yard, and maintaining that some of them had been aknowledged genuine by the great council of the nation,* they could, by

affirmed the whole of their crime had been, to meet before day, and sing a hymn to Christ as to their God. His own words are, "Affirmabant, hanc fuisse summam vel culpæ suæ vel erroris, quod essent soliti stato die ante lucem convenire, carmenque Christo quasi Deo dicere."

* Some remarkable instances of this we have in the sacred books, published when the facts above mentioned therein were notorious, and when some of the persons named were probably yet alive. After the resurrection of Lazarus, the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered a council, and said, What do we? for this man does many miracles. If we let him alone, all men will believe on him, John xi, 47. And after Peter and John had publicly cured the cripple, who used to beg at the gate of the temple,

such notorious lies, engage thousands of citizens, and some aldermen, to put all their trust in the villain hanged at their request?

4. You believe that Christianity is a gross imposture, and yet you can not deny that thousands of learned Romans and wise Greeks, who agreed to despise the Jews above all other men, took for their Savior that very Jesus, of whom his own countrymen had been ashamed, and whom they had crucified as an impostor. Is not this as absurd as to believe that thousands of wise Englishmen, and sensible Frenchmen, could be induced, by the absurd tale of two or three Hottentots, to worship a certain Hottentot whom the whole nation of Hottentots had condemned to be hanged, as being more worthy of an ignominious death than the bloody ringleader of a seditious mob?

5. If you believe, with one of the popes, that the history of Christ "is a mere fable," and that there never was such an extraordinary person, you believe that the heathens, the Jews, and the Mohammedans, have agreed with the Christians, their sworn enemies, to carry on the most amazing imposture; for Pliny, Tacitus, Lucian, and Suetonius, heathen authors, who lived soon after Christ, make express mention of him; as do also

the rulers, and elders, and scribes, and Annas the high priest, and Caiaphas, and John, and Alexander, and as many as were of the kindred of the high priest, were gathered together at Jerusalem, saying, What shall we do to these men? for that, indeed, a NOTABLE MIRACLE has been done by them, is manifest to ALL them that dwell at Jerusalem, and we can not deny it, Acts iv, 5–16.

Mohammed, many of the rabbis, and Julian the emperor, that powerful and crafty apostate, who not only never denied Christ's existence, but openly acknowledged that Paul, Mark, Matthew, and Peter, were the authors of the gospels and epistles which bear their name. Now, is not this as ridiculous as to believe that the pope, the mufti, and the inquisitors, have laid their heads with Messrs. Voltaire, Hume, and Rousseau, to favor a forgery surversive of Popery, Mohammedanism, and infidelity?

6. If you deny the authenticity of the four gospels, which are the only ancient histories that we have of our Savior, and yet believe that there was such a personage as Jesus Christ, whose fame so spread through the Roman empire, that, in less than three hundred and thirty years, he was not only reckoned superior to the Roman emperor, but to Jupiter himself, and that, nevertheless, not one historian during all that time gave the world a particular account of him—which must be the case, if the four gospels are a forgery—might you not as reasonably suppose, that, if a blazing meteor appeared in our day, and eclipsed the stars, the moon, and the sun itself, no astronomer, for several centuries, would take particular notice of so wonderful a phenomenon?

7. If the Gospel is a delusion, you believe that St. Paul, who was a man of sense, learning, and intrepidity, was seduced by—nobody, to preach for near thirty years, with astonishing zeal and matchless hardships, an imposture,

against the abettors of which he just before breathed nothing but threatenings and slaughter. Would it be half so absurd to believe that Mr. Wilkes has suddenly commenced the minister's advocate, goes through the kingdom to recommend the present administration, and accounts it an honor to be mobbed, whipped, or stoned, in every borough, for his excessive attachment to the king?

8. The instantaneous conversion of thousands was wrought by means of public appeals to notorious matter of fact. Hear the language of the apostles to the Jews: This ye yourselves *know*, Acts, ii, 24. Ye *know* the thing done through *all* Judea, Acts x, 37, 38. The king *knowing* these things. This thing was *not* done in a corner, Acts xxvi, 26. Now, if Christianity is not founded upon indubitable facts, might you not as well believe that twelve men, broke loose from bedlam, brought last year thousands of Deists over to Christianity, by saying to them, "Ye know"—what you are perfect strangers to; that is, "Ye know" that we are a pack of bedlamites?

9. If the Gospel is forged, you believe that the Corinthians, etc., handed down to posterity, as a sacred treasure, epistles where St. Paul mentions their amazing conversion from gross immoralities, congratulates them about the spiritual or miraculous gifts in which they abounded, 1 Cor. xii, 1, and gives them particular directions how to use the gift of tongues to edification, when yet they were totally unacquainted with

any such things. Might you not with equal wisdom believe, that if Mr. Wilkes wrote to the house of commons a congratulatory epistle about their having received, by the laying on of his hands, the power of speaking Turkish, Arabic, and Chinese, they would carefully transmit his letter to the next generation as a divine performance; and that none of Mr. Wilkes' enemies would expose the impudence of so absurd a pretension?

10. If you say that the apostles were fools, you must believe that foolish fishermen laid a scheme with so much wisdom, and carried it on with so much art, as to deceive multitudes of Greeks, noted for their acuteness, and numbers of Romans, famous for their prudence. Might you not as well believe that twelve poor, unarmed idiots, once combined to take the strongest towns in Europe, and accomplished their strange designs by means that strike the profoundest politicians with astonishment?

11. If you affirm that the apostles were cheats and liars, you run into as great a difficulty; for you must believe that the greatest knaves that ever existed, contrary to their own principles and advantage, went through the world exposing themselves to the greatest hardships, and severest tortures, to death, to recommend, both by their example and precepts, the strictest piety toward God, and the most scrupulous honesty toward man; perpetually denouncing eternal destruction to cheats and hypocrites, and the torments of a lake that burneth with fire and

brimstone to every one that loveth or maketh a lie. Would it be more absurd to believe that the twelve greatest epicures in England have, for a course of years, fulfilled a mutual agreement of preaching, night and day, abstinence and fasting through the three kingdoms, merely to have the pleasure of starving to death for their pains?

12. To conclude: if the Gospel—and consequently the Scripture—is an imposture, you suppose that some poor Galilean fishermen, only by means of an absurd lie, which they told without wit, and wrote without elegance, foiled the multitude of the Jewish and Pagan priests, who had prejudice, custom, possession, learning, oratory, wealth, laws, governors, and emperors, on their side; yea, and truth also, upon your principles, at least when they decried the Gospel as a cheat. Would it be more ridiculous to believe that David killed Goliath with a grain of sand, and cut off his head with a spire of grass; or, that our sailors sink men-of-war with a puff of breath, while our soldiers batter down ramparts with snowballs?

O ye sons of worldly wisdom, drop your unjust prejudices; candidly weigh both sides of the question, and you will soon see, that in rejecting the Gospel as an imposture, you display a far greater degree of credulity than we do in cordially receiving it.

After this short defense of the oracles of God, and this little attack upon the persons who suspect their authenticity, I hope I may—consist-

ently with the plan of an appeal to reason—produce from *the Scriptures* a few more arguments to prove the original depravity and lost estate of mankind.

THIRTY-FIRST ARGUMENT.

The spiritual life of the soul consists in its union with God, as the natural life of the body does in its union with the soul: and as poison and the sword kill the latter, so unbelief and sin destroy the former.

The first man was endued with this twofold life. God, says the divine historian, breathed into him the breath of lives, and he became a living body and a living soul; he had both an animal life in common with beasts and a spiritual life in common with angels. St. Paul, who calls this angelical life the life of God, intimates that it consisted both in that experimental knowledge of our Creator, wherein, says our Church, "standeth our eternal life," and in righteousness and true holiness, the moral and most glorious image of the supreme Being.

To suppose man was created void of this essential knowledge and holy love, is to suppose he came very wicked out of the hands of the Parent of all good; for what is a rational creature that neither knows nor loves his Creator, but a monster of stupidity and ingratitude, a wretch actually dead to God, and deserving present destruction?

When the Lord therefore said to man, in the day that thou eatest thereof, that is, in the day

that thou sinnest, thou shalt surely die, it was as if he had said, "in that very day sin shall assuredly separate between thee and the God of thy life; thou shalt certainly lose the glorious view which thou hast of my boundless goodness and infinite perfections; thou shalt infallibly quench the spirit of ardent love, and stop the breath of delightful praise, by which thou livest both to my glory and thy comfort; and thy soul, dead in trespasses and sins, shall remain in the filthy prison of a mortal body, till death breaks it open, to remove thee to thy own place."

And was not this Adam's case after his fall? Did he not know that he was naked—stripped of the glorious image of his Creator? Did not guilty shame immediately prompt him to hide and protect, as well as he could, his degenerate and enfeebled body? Devoid of the ardent love he felt for God before, and of the pure delight he enjoyed in him, was not he left the wretched prey of tormenting fears? Did he not evidence his hatred of his heavenly Benefactor, by dreading his voice, and flying from him as hastily as he should have fled from the infernal serpent?

Was he not deprived of the knowledge by which, at first sight, he discovered the nature of Eve, and gave to all living creatures names expressive of their respective properties? Was he not, I say, deprived of that intuitive knowledge and excellent wisdom, when he foolishly hid himself among the trees from his all-seeing,

omnipresent Creator? And is it not evident that he was lost to all sense of filial fear toward God, and conjugal love toward Eve, when, instead of self-accusations, penitential confessions, and earnest pleas for mercy, he showed nothing at his trial but stubbornness, malice, and insolence?

Such was the state of corruption into which Adam had deplorably fallen, before he multiplied the human species. Now, according to the invariable laws of Providence, an upright, holy nature can no more proceed from a fallen, sinful one, than gentle lambs can be begotten by fierce tigers, or harmless doves by venomous serpents. Common sense, therefore, and natural philosophy, dictate that our first parents could not communicate the angelical life which they had lost, nor impart to their children a better nature than their own, and that their depravity is as much ours by nature, as the fierceness of the first lion is the natural property of all the lions in the world.

FOUR OBJECTIONS.

I. Should it be said, that "this doctrine reflects on the attributes of God, who, as the wise and gracious Governor of the world, should have foreseen and prevented the fall of Adam,"

I answer, 1. God made man in his image, part of which consists in free agency, or a power to determine his own actions. And if creating

a free agent is not repugnant to Divine wisdom and goodness, the wrong choice, or sin of a free agent, can be no impeachment of those perfections in the Deity.*

* God answers thus for himself in Milton:

Man will fall,
He and his faithless progeny. Whose fault?
Whose but his own? Ingrate! he had of me
All he could have: I made him just and right;
Sufficient to have stood, though free to fall,
Such I created all th' ethereal powers:
Freely they stood who stood, and fell who fell.
Not free, what proof could they have given sincere
Of true allegiance, constant faith or love,
Where only what they needs must do appear'd;
Not what they would? What praise could they receive?
What pleasure I from such obedience paid,
When will and reason, (reason also is choice,)
Useless and vain, of freedom both despoiled,
Made passive both, had served necessity,
Not me? They, therefore, as to right belong'd
So were created, nor can justly accuse
Their Maker, or their making, or their fate.
As if predestination overruled
Their will, disposed by absolute decree,
Or high foreknowledge. They themselves decreed
Their own revolt, not I: if I foreknew,
Foreknowledge had no influence on their fault,
Which had no less proved certain unforeknown.

Young expresses the same sentiment, with his peculiar boldness and energy.

Blame not the bowels of the Deity:
Man shall be bless'd as far as man permits.
Not man alone, all rationals, Heaven arms
With an illustrious, but tremendous power,
To counteract its own most gracious ends;
And this of strict necessity, not choice;
That power denied, man, angels were no more
But passive engines, void of praise or blame.
Heaven wills our happiness, allows our doom:

2. Suppose man had not been endued with freedom of choice, he would only have ranked among admirable machines, and nothing could have been more absurd than to place him in a state of probation. And suppose, when he was in that state, divine Power had irresistibly turned the scale of his will to obedience, the trial would have been prevented, and the counsel of divine Wisdom foolishly defeated.

3. God did all that a wise and good ruler of rational and free creatures could do to prevent sin. He placed in Adam's heart a vigorous principle of holiness; he granted him sufficient strength to continue in obedience; he indulged him with his blessed presence and converse to encourage him in the way of duty; he strictly forbade him to sin; he enforced the prohibition by the fearful threatening of death; he promised to crown his continuance in holiness with a glorious immortality, and gave him the tree of life as a pledge of this inestimable blessing. To have gone farther would have been entirely inconsistent with his wisdom; an absolute restraint being as contrary to the liberty of a moral agent, and the nature of the divine law, as chaining down a harmless man that he may not commit murder, is contrary to the freedom of Englishmen, and the laws of this realm. Nor can we, either with reason or decency, complain that

Invites us ardently, but not compels:
Heaven but persuades, almighty man decrees;
Man is the maker of immortal fates,
Man falls by man, if finally he falls.

God did not make us absolutely immutable and perfect like himself; this is charging him with folly, for not enduing us with infinite wisdom, and knowledge every way boundless; that is, for not making us gods instead of men.

4. In case man fell, Divine mercy had decreed his recovery by Jesus Christ; and when the almighty Redeemer shall have brought life out of death, and light out of darkness, the mysterious drama of creation and redemption, of which we see but one or two acts, will appear, even to our objectors, every way worthy of its infinitely-wise and gracious Author.

II. In the mean time, they will still urge that "Adam's posterity [then unborn] could not justly partake of the consequences of his transgression." But shall cavils overthrow matter of fact? Do not we see in every unrenewed person, the unbelief, pride, sinful curiosity, sensuality, and alienation from God, to which our first parents were subjected at their fall? Do not women bear children with sorrow as well as Eve? Is the ground less cursed for us than for Adam; and do we not toil, suffer, and die, as he did? If this order of things were unjust, would the righteous God have permitted its continuance to the present time?

Besides, Adam contained in himself, as in miniature, all his posterity. The various nations of men are nothing but different branches growing from that original root. They are Adam, or man, existing at large; as the branches of a spreading oak, with all the acorns that have

grown upon, and dropped from them, during a long succession of summers, are nothing but the original acorn, unfolding and multiplying itself with all its essential properties. It is, then, as ridiculous to wonder that the sons of depraved Adam should naturally be depraved, as that an acorn should naturally produce an oak, and a poisonous root a malignant plant. Again:

Adam was the general head, representative, and father of mankind; and we suffer for his rebellion legally; as the children of those who have sold themselves for slaves are born in a state of wretched slavery; and as the descendants of a noble traitor lose the title by their ancestor's crime; naturally, as the sons of a bankrupt suffer poverty for their father's extravagance, or as Gehazi's leprosy clave to him and his seed for ever; and unavoidably, as an unborn child shares the fate of his unhappy mother, when she inadvertently poisons, or desperately stabs herself.

III. "But," say the same objectors, "supposing it be granted, that we are naturally depraved, yet, if our depravity is natural, it is necessary; and we are no more blamable for it than lions for their fierceness, or Ethiopians for their black complexion."

1. Our objectors would not, I presume, be understood to insinuate, by "blamable," that our depravity does not render us detestable in the eyes of a holy God, or that it is not in itself blameworthy. Do they less dislike the complexion of the Ethiopians, or less detest the

destructive rage of lions, because it is natural to them? If moral dispositions ceased to be worthy of praise or dispraise as soon as they are rooted, morally necessary, and in that sense natural, what absurd consequences would follow? Sinners would become guiltless by arriving at complete impenitency; and God could not be praised for his holiness, nor Satan dispraised for his sinfulness—holiness being as essential to God, by the absolute perfection of his nature, as sin is morally necessary to the devil, by the unconquerable habit which he has willfully contracted, and in which he obstinately remains.

2. Should they mean, that "we are not answerable, or accountable for our depravity," I reply, though I should grant—which I am very far from doing*—that we are no way accountable for our moral infection, yet it can not be denied that we are answerable for our obstinate refusal of relief, and for the willful neglect of the means found out by Divine mercy for our cure. Can we justly charge God with either our misfortune or our guilt? Do not parents, by the law of nature, represent their unborn posterity? If Adam ruined us by a common transgression,

* Milton introduces Adam speaking thus:

Ah! why should all mankind,
For one man's fault, thus guiltless be condemn'd,
If guiltless? but from me what can proceed,
But all corrupt, both mind and will depraved,
Not to *do* only but to *will* the same
With me? How can they then acquitted stand
In sight of God? Him after all disputes
Forced I absolve.

has not Christ, the second Adam, provided for us a common salvation? Jude 3; Heb. ii, 3. If, by the offense of one, [Adam,] judgment came upon all men to condemnation, by the righteousness of one, [Christ,] is not the free gift come upon all men to justification of life? Rom. v, 18. And since God has declared that the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father beyond the short period of this transitory life, if any suffer after death, is it not entirely for their own unbelief and peculiar sins?* Compare John iii, 18, 19, and Mark xvi, 16. But what follows completely vindicates our Creator's goodness.

3. Do sin and misery abound by our fall in Adam? Grace and glory abound much more by our redemption in Jesus Christ, Rom. v, 20. And "it must be owing to our own perverseness, or our own negligence"—says the ingenious

*Milton introduces God speaking thus to the Messiah:

> Man shall not quite be lost, but saved who will,
> Yet not of will in him, but grace in me
> Freely vouchsafed: once more I will renew
> His lapsed powers—yet once more he shall stand
> On even ground against his mortal foe,
> By me upheld. Be thou in Adam's room
> The head of all mankind, though Adam's son.
> As in him perish all men, so in thee,
> As from a second root, shall be restored
> As many as are restored, without thee none.
> His crimes make guilty all his sons; thy merit
> Imputed shall absolve them, who renounce
> Their own both righteous and unrighteous deeds,
> And live in thee transplanted, and from thee
> Receive new life.

Hervey, with great truth—"if we do not levy a tax upon our loss, and rise even by our fall."* This leaves us not the least shadow of reason to complain of the Divine proceedings respecting us.

We may, then, conclude that a moral depravity, which comes upon us by the willful choice of a parent, in whom we seminally and federally existed—a depravity which cleaves to us by an obstinate neglect of the infinitely-precious means provided to remove it—a depravity which works now by our own personal choice, and to which we daily give our assent by the free commission of sins that are avoidable, leaves us not only accountable, but inexcusable before God.

IV. However, the advocates for the natural purity of the human race—endeavoring to clog with difficulties what they can not disprove to be matter of fact—still assert, "As we have our souls immediately from God, if we are born sinful, he must either create sinful souls, which can not be supposed without impiety, or send sinless souls into sinful bodies, to be defiled by the unhappy union, which is as inconsistent with his goodness as his justice. Add to this," say

* Creation's great superior, man, is thine:
Thine is Redemption. How should this great truth
Raise man o'er man, and kindle seraphs here!
Redemption! 'Twas Creation more sublime:
Redemption! 'Twas the labor of the skies:
Far more than labor—it was death in heaven.
A truth so strange! 'Twere bold to think it true;
If not far bolder still to disbelieve.—YOUNG.

the objectors, "that nothing can be more unphilosophical than to suppose that a body, a mere lump of organized matter, is able to communicate to a spirit that moral pollution of which itself is as incapable as the murderer's sword is incapable of cruelty."

This specious objection, which Dr. Watts acknowledges to be "the very chief point of difficulty in all the controversies about original sin," is wholly founded upon the vulgar notion, that we have our souls immediately from God by infusion; it will therefore entirely fall to the ground, if we can prove that we receive them, as well as our bodies, by traduction from Adam; and that this is fact, appears, if I am not mistaken, by the following arguments:

1. We have no ground, from Scripture or reason, to think that adulterers can, when they please, put God upon creating new souls to animate the spurious fruit of their crime. On the contrary, it is said that God rested on the seventh day from *all* his work of creation.

2. Eve herself was not created but in Adam; God breathed no breath of life into her, as he did into her husband, to make him a living soul. Therefore, when Adam saw her, he said, she shall be called woman, because she—her whole self, not her body only—was taken out of man. If, then, the soul of the first woman sprang from Adam's soul, as her body from his body, what reason have we to believe that the souls of her posterity are immediately infused, as Adam's was when God created him?

3. All agree that, under God, we receive life from our parents; and if life, then certainly our soul, which is the principle of life.

4. Other animals have power to propagate their own species after its kind; they can generate animated bodies. Why should man be but half a father? When did God stint him to propagate the mere shell of his person, the body without the soul? Was it when he blessed him, and said, Be fruitful and multiply? When he spoke thus, did he not address himself to the soul, as well as to the body? Can the body, alone, either understand or execute a command? Is it not, on the contrary, highly reasonable to conclude, that by virtue of the Divine appointment and blessing, the whole man can be fruitful and multiply, and the soul, under proper circumstances, can generate a soul, as a thought begets a thought; and can kindle the flame of life, as one taper lights another, without weakening its immortal substance, any more than God the Father—if I may be allowed the comparison—impairs the Divine essence by the eternal generation of his only-begotten Son?

5. Does not matter of fact corroborate the preceding argument? A sprightly race-horse generally begets a mettlesome colt; while a heavy cart-horse begets a colt that bears the stamp of its sire's dullness. And is it not so with mankind in general? The children of the Hottentots and Esquimaux are commonly as stupid, while those of the English and French are usually as sharp, as their parents. You

seldom see a wit springing from two half-witted people, or a fool descended from very sensible parents. The children of men of genius are frequently as remarkable for some branch of hereditary genius, as those of blockheads for their native stupidity. Nothing is more common, than to see very passionate and flighty parents have very passionate and flighty children. And I have a hundred times discovered, not only the features, look, and complexion, of a father and mother in the child's face, but seen a congenial soul looking out—if I may so speak—at those windows of the body which we call the eyes. Hence I conclude that the advice frequently given to those who are about to choose a companion for life, "Take care of the breed," is not absolutely without foundation, although some lay too much stress upon it, forgetting that a thousand unknown accidents may form exceptions to the general rule, and not considering that the peculiarity of the father's breed may be happily corrected by that of the mother, and vice versa; and that as the grace of God, yielded to, may sweeten the worst temper, so sin, persisted in, may sour the best.

6. Again: Moses informs us, that fallen Adam begat a son in his own likeness and after his image; but had he generated a body without a soul, he would not have begotten a son in his own likeness, since he was not a mere mortal body, but a fallen embodied spirit. Compare Gen. v, 3, with xlvi, 26.

"But upon this scheme," will objectors say,

"if Adam was converted when he begat a son, he begat a converted soul." This does by no means follow; for if he was born of God after his fall, it was by grace through faith, and not by nature through generation; he could not, therefore, communicate his spiritual regeneration by natural generation, any more than a great scholar can propagate his learning together with his species.

Should it be again objected, that the soul is not generated, because the Scriptures declare, "The Lord is the Father of the spirits of all flesh, and the spirit returns to God who gave it," I answer, it is also written, that Job and David were "fearfully made and fashioned by the hands of God in the womb;" that he "formed Jeremiah in the belly;" and that "we are the offspring of him who made of one blood all nations of men." Now, if the latter Scriptures do not exclude the interposition of parents in the formation of their children's bodies, by what rule of criticism or divinity can we prove, that the former exclude that interposition in the production of their souls?

Nor can materialists, who have no ideas of generation, but such as are gross and carnal like their own system, with any shadow of reason infer, that "if the soul is generated with the body, it will also perish with it;" for dissolution is so far from being a necessary consequence of the spiritual generation of souls, that it would not so much as have followed the generation of our bodies, if Adam had not brought "sin into the

world, and death by sin." Again: if wheat, a material seed which grows out of the same earthly clod with the chaff that incloses it, can subsist unimpaired, when that mean cover is destroyed, how much more can the soul—that spiritual, vital, heavenly power, which is of a nature so vastly superior to the body in which it is confined—continue to exist, when flesh and blood are returned to their native dust!

Should some persons reject what I say of the traduction of souls, in order to illustrate the derivation of original sin, and should they say that they have no more idea of the generation than honest Nicodemus had of the regeneration of a spirit, I beg leave to observe two things:

First: If such objectors are converted, they will not deny the regeneration of souls by the Spirit of God, since they experienced it, and our Lord speaks of it as a blessed reality, even while he represents it as a mystery unknown as to the manner of it, John iii, 8–13. Now, if pious souls have been regenerated from the beginning of the world, without exactly knowing how, is it reasonable to deny that souls are generated, merely because we can not exactly account for the manner in which that wonder takes place?

Second: Should my objectors be versed in natural philosophy, they need not be told, that even the kind of generation which they allow is as much a mystery to man, as the movement of a watch is to a child that just sees the case and the glass. If they will not believe me, let them believe him who "gave his heart to search out

by wisdom concerning all things that are done under heaven;" and who, touching upon our question, says, "As thou knowest not what is the way of the Spirit, nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child; even so thou knowest not the works of God, who maketh all," Eccles. xi, 5.

For my part, I do not see why the same almighty Preserver of men, who—as St. Paul tells us—"made of *one blood* the bodies of all nations of men," might not, of one *active thought* and *ardent desire*, have made the souls of all nations of men also. Have not thought and desire as great affinity to the nature of the soul as blood has to that of the body? And, consequently, are not our ideas of the traduction of the soul as clear as those which we can form of the generation of the body?

Having dwelt so long upon the manner in which mankind naturally propagate original corruption together with their whole species, I hope I may reasonably resume the conclusion of my argument, and affirm, that if Adam corrupted the fountain of human nature in himself, we, the streams, can not but be naturally corrupted.

THIRTY-SECOND ARGUMENT.

God being a spirit, reason and revelation jointly inform us, that his law is spiritual, and extends to our thoughts and tempers, as well as to our words and actions. At all times, and in all places, it forbids every thing that is sinful, or has the least tendency to sin; it commands all

that is excellent, and enjoins it to be done in the utmost perfection of our dispensation.

Therefore, if we have not always trusted and delighted in God more than in all things and persons; if for one instant we have loved or feared the creature more than the Creator, we have had another god besides the Lord, Col. iii, 5; Phil. iii, 19. Have we once omitted to adore him in spirit and in truth inwardly, or at any time worshiped him without becoming veneration outwardly, we have transgressed as if we had bowed to a graven image, John iv, 24. Though perjury and imprecations should never have defiled our lips, yet, if ever we mentioned God's tremendous name thoughtlessly, or irreverently, in prayer, reading, or conversation, we have taken it in vain, and the Searcher of hearts will not hold us guiltless, Phil. ii, 10. And if it has not been our constant practice and delight to enter his courts with praise, and spend the whole Sabbath in his blessed service, we have polluted that sacred day, and the guilt of profaneness may justly be charged upon us, Isaiah lviii, 13.

Did we ever show any disrespect to our superiors, or unkindness to our equals and inferiors, we have violated the precept that commands us to honor all men, and be punctual in the discharge of all social and relative duties, 1 Pet. ii, 17. Did we ever weaken our constitution by excess, strike our neighbor in anger, or wound his character with an injurious word, or only suffer hatred to rise in our breast against

him, we have committed a species of murder; for, "whosoever shall say to his brother, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire;" and "whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer," Matt. v, 22, 1 John ii, 15. Are we "the friends of the world," an apostle brands us with the name of adulterers, because we are false to our heavenly bridegroom, James iv, 4. And if we have only "looked on a woman to lust after her," Christ declares that we "have committed adultery with her already in our heart," Matt. v, 28. Have we overcharged our customers, exacted upon any one in our bargains, insisted on a full salary for work done by halves, defrauded the king of any part of his taxes, or taken advantage of the necessity and ignorance of others to get by their loss, we swell the numerous tribe of reputable thieves and genteel robbers, Matt. xxii, 21. Neglecting to keep our word and baptismal vow, or speaking an untruth, is "bearing false witness against our neighbor," ourselves, or Christ, who styles himself "the truth," Rev. xxii, 15. And giving place to a fretful, discontented thought, or an irregular, envious desire, is a breach of that spiritual precept, which made St. Paul say, "I had not known lust," or a wrong desire to be sin, "except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet," Romans vii, 7.

Such being the extreme spirituality of the law, who can plead that he never was guilty of breaking one, or even all of the ten commandments?

And if we have broken them all, either in

their literal or spiritual meaning, and are threatened for every transgression with a curse suitable to the Lawgiver's infinite majesty, who can conceive the greatness of our guilt and danger? Till we find a sanctuary under the shadow of a Savior's wings, are we not as liable to the strokes of divine vengeance as a felon, guilty of breaking all the statutes of his country, is liable to the penalty of human laws?

If this is not the case, there is no justice in the court of heaven, and the laws given with so much terror from the Almighty's throne, like the statutes of children, or the Pope's bulls, are only "*bruta fulmina*"—words without effect, and thunders without lightnings.

Some indeed flatter themselves that "the law, since the Gospel dispensation, abates much of its demands of perfect love." But their hope is equally unsupported by reason and Scripture. The law is the eternal rule of right, the moral picture of the God of holiness and love. It can no more vary than its eternal, unchangeable Original. The Lord "will not alter the thing that has gone out of his mouth." He must cease to be what he is, before his law can lose its power to bind either men or angels; and all creatures shall break sooner than it shall bend; for if it commands us only to "love God with all our heart, and our neighbor as ourselves," what *just* abatement can be made in so equitable a precept? Therefore, man who breaks the righteous law of God as naturally as he breathes, is and must continue under its fearful curse, till

he has secured the pardon and help offered him in the Gospel.

THIRTY-THIRD ARGUMENT.

Nor is the Gospel itself without its threatenings; for if the Lord, on the one hand, "opens the kingdom of heaven to all believers," he declares, on the other, that "they all shall be damned who believe not the truth," when it is proposed to them with sufficient evidence; and that "he who believeth not is condemned already, *because* he hath not believed on the name of the only-begotten Son of God," 2 Thess. ii, 12; John iii, 18. From these awful declarations I draw the following argument:

If faith is so essential a virtue, how depraved and wretched is man who is so excessively slow of heart to believe the things that concern his salvation! Matter of fact daily proves that we readily admit the evidence of men, while we peremptorily reject the testimony of God. Commodore Byron's extraordinary account of the giants in Patagonia is, or was, every-where received; but that of Jesus Christ, concerning those who "walk in the broad way to destruction," is and has always been too generally disregarded, Matt. vii, 13.

On reading in a newspaper an anonymous letter from Naples, we believe that rivers of liquid fire flow from the convulsed bowels of a mountain, and form burning lakes in the adjacent plains: but if we read in the Scripture that Tophet, the burning lake, is prepared of old for

the impenitent, we beg leave to withhold our assent; and, unless Divine grace prevents, we must fall in, and feel, before we will assent and believe, Isa. xxx, 33.

Who that has seen a map of Africa ever doubted whether there is such a kingdom as that of Morocco, though he never saw it, or any of its natives? But who that has perused the Gospel, never doubted whether "the kingdom of heaven within us," or that state of "righteousness, peace, and joy, in the Holy Ghost," which God opens to believers upon earth, is not a mere imagination? though Christ himself invites us to it, and many pious persons not only testify they enjoy it, but actually show its blessed fruits, in heavenly tempers, a blameless life, a triumphant death, Mark i, 14; Luke xvii, 21; Rom. xiv, 17; Rev. i, 6.

With what readiness do we depend upon an honest man's promise, especially if it is reduced into a bond? But with what reluctance do we rely on the "many great and precious promises" of God, "confirmed by an oath," delivered before the most unexceptionable witnesses, and sealed by the blood of Jesus Christ? 2 Pet. i, 4; 2 Cor. i, 20; Heb. vi, 17.

And ye numerous tribes of patients, how do ye shame those who call themselves Christians! So entire is the trust which you repose upon a physician's advice, whom perhaps you have seen but once, that you immediately abstain from your pleasant food, and regularly take medicines, which, for what you know, may be as injurious

to your stomach as they are offensive to your palate; but we who profess Christianity generally quarrel with Christ's prescriptions; and if we do not understand the nature of a remedy which he recommends, we think this a sufficient reason for refusing it. From Christ only, if we can help it, we will take nothing upon trust.

One false witness is often sufficient to make us believe that a neighbor vows to do us an injury; but twenty ministers of Jesus can not persuade us God hath sworn in his wrath, that, if we die in our sins, we shall not enter into his rest, Psa. xcv, 11, or that, if we come to him for pardon and life, he will in no wise cast us out, John vi, 37. The most defamatory and improbable reports spread with uncommon swiftness, and pass for matter of fact; but when St. Paul testifies, that if any man hath not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his, Rom. viii, 9, who believes his testimony? Does not the same mind that was open to scandalous lies, prove shut against such a revealed truth?

Isaiah asks, "Who hath believed our report?" and Jesus says, "When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith upon the earth?" Alas! there would have been no room for these plaintive questions, if the word of God had not been proposed to our faith; for the most groundless and absurd assertions of men find multitudes of believers. We see daily, that an idle rumor about a peace or a war meets with such credit as to raise or sink the stocks in a few hours.

It is evident that man has a foolish and evil

heart of unbelief, ready to strain out a gnat in divine revelation, while he greedily swallows up the camel of human imposture. Now, if it is part of the Gospel which Christ commands his ministers to preach to every creature, that he who believeth not shall be damned, Mark xvi, 16, how great is the depravity, and how imminent the danger of fallen man, who has such a strong propensity to so destructive, so damnable a sin as unbelief?

THIRTY-FOURTH ARGUMENT.

But let us come still nearer to the point. If we are not by nature conceived in sin, and children of wrath, millions of infants, who die without actual sin, have no need of the blood of Christ to wash their robes, nor his Spirit to purify their hearts. The incarnation of the eternal Word, and the influences of the Holy Spirit, are as unnecessary to them as the visits of a physician, and his remedies, to persons in perfect health. Their spotless innocency is a sufficient passport for heaven; baptism is ridiculous, and the Christian religion absurd, in their case.

Nor does it appear, why it might not be as absurd with regard to the rest of mankind, did they but act their part a little better; for if we are naturally innocent, we have a natural power to remain so; and by a proper use of it, we may avoid standing in need of the salvation procured by Christ for the lost.

Nay, if innocent nature, carefully improved, may be the way to eternal life, it is certainly the

readiest way, and the Son of God speaks like the grand deceiver of mankind, when he says, "I am the way; *no man* cometh to the Father, but *by me*." Christians, let self-conceited Deists entertain the thought, but harbor it not a moment; in you it would be highly blasphemous.

THIRTY-FIFTH ARGUMENT.

And that you may detest it the more, consider farther that all the capital doctrines of Christianity are built upon that fundamental article of our depravity and danger. If all flesh hath not corrupted its way, how severe are those words of Christ, "Except ye repent, ye shall all perish;" and, "Except ye be converted, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven!" If all are not carnal and earthly by their first birth, how absurd is what he said to Nicodemus: "Except a man be born again, he can not see the kingdom of heaven!" If there is any spiritual health in us by nature, how notoriously false are these assertions! All our sufficiency is of God—Without me ye can do nothing. If every natural man is not the reverse of the holiness in which Adam was created, how irrational these and the like Scriptures: If any man is in Christ, he is a *new creature;* In Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a *new creature.* To conclude: if mankind are not universally corrupt, guilty, and condemned, how unnecessarily alarming is this declaration: He that believeth not on the Son of God is condemned already; the wrath of God abideth

on him: and if we are not foolish, unrighteous, unholy, and enslaved to sin, why is Christ made to us of God, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption? Take away, then, the doctrine of the fall, and the tower of evangelical truth, built by Jesus Christ, is no more founded on a rock, but upon the sand: or, rather, the stately fabric is instantly thrown down, and leaves no ruins behind it but the dry morality of Epictetus, covered with the rubbish of the wildest metaphors, and buried in the most impertinent ceremonies.

THIRTY-SIXTH ARGUMENT.

One more absurdity still remains. If man is not in the most imminent danger of destruction, nothing can be more extravagant than the great article of the Christian faith, thus expressed in the Nicene creed: "Jesus Christ, very God of very God, by whom all things were made, for us men, and for our salvation, came down from heaven, was made man, and was crucified *for us.*"

Is it not astonishing that there should be people so infatuated as to join every Lord's day in this solemn confession, and to deny, the other six, the horrible danger to which they are exposed, till they have an interest in Christ? Is not the least grain of common sense sufficient to make an attentive person see, that if He, by whom all things were made, came from heaven for *our* salvation—if he was made man that he might suffer, and be crucified for *us*—he saw *us*

guilty, condemned, lost, and obnoxious to the damnation which we continually deprecate in the litany? Shall we charge the Son of God, in whom are hid all the treasures of divine wisdom, with the unparalleled folly of coming from heaven to atone for innocent creatures; to reprieve persons uncondemned; to redeem a race of free men; to deliver from the curse a people not accursed; to hang by exquisitely-dolorous wounds, made in his sacred hands and feet, on a tree more ignominious than the gallows, for honest men, and very good sort of people; and to expire under the sense of the wrath of Heaven that he might save from hell people in no danger of going there?

Reader, is it possible to entertain for a moment these wild notions, without offering the utmost indignity to the Son of God, and the greatest violence to common sense? And does not reason cry, as with the sound of a thousand trumpets, "If our Creator could not save us consistently with his glorious attributes, but by becoming incarnate, passing through the deepest scenes of humiliation and temptation, distress and want, for thirty-three years, and undergoing, at last, the most shameful, painful, and accursed death, in our place, our wickedness must be desperate, our sins execrable, our guilt black as the shadow of death, and our danger dreadful as the gloom and torments of hell?"

"Shocking doctrine!" says the self-conceited moralist, as he rises from his chair full of indignation, and ready to throw aside the argu-

ments he can not answer. Reader, if you are the man, remember that this is an appeal to reason, and not to passion—to matter of fact, and not to your vitiated taste for pleasing error. You may cry out at the sight of a shroud, a coffin, a grave, "Shocking objects!" But your loudest exclamations will not lessen the awful reality, by which many have happily been shocked into a timely consideration of, and preparation for, approaching death.

"But this doctrine," you still urge, "drives people to despair." Yes, to a despair of being saved by their own merits and righteousness; and this is as reasonable in a sinner who comes to the Savior as despairing to swim across the sea is rational in a passenger that takes ship. Our Church, far from speaking against it, says, that "sinners should be dismayed at God's rightful justice, and should *despair indeed*, as touching any hope that may be *in themselves*." Hom. On falling from God, second part.

A just despair of ourselves is widely different from a despair of God's mercy, and Christ's willingness to save the chief of sinners, who flies to him for refuge. This horrible sin, this black crime of Judas, springs rather from a sullen, obstinate rejection of the remedy, than, as some vainly suppose, from a clear knowledge of the disease. And that none may commit it, Christ's ministers take particular care not to preach the law without the Gospel, and the fall without the recovery: no sooner have they opened the wound of sin, festering in the sin-

ner's conscience, than they pour in the balm of Divine promises, and make gracious offers of a free pardon and full salvation by the compassionate Redeemer, who came to justify the ungodly, and to save the lost.

And, indeed, those only who see their sin and misery, will cordially embrace the Gospel; for common sense dictates, that none care for the king's mercy but those who know they are guilty, condemned criminals. How excessively unreasonable it is then to object, that the preaching of man's corrupt and lost estate drives people to despair of divine mercy, when it is absolutely the only means of showing them their need of it, and making them gladly accept it upon God's own terms.

Leaving, therefore, that trite objection to the unthinking vulgar, once more, judicious reader, summon all your rational powers, and, after imploring help from on high to use them aright, say, whether these last arguments do not prove that no Christian can deny the complete fall of mankind, without renouncing the capital doctrines of his own religion—overturning the very foundation of the Gospel, which he professes to receive—staining the glory of the Redeemer, whom he pretends to honor, and impiously taking from his crown, wisdom, truth, and charity, the three jewels that are its brightest ornaments. Sum up, then, all that has been advanced concerning the afflictive dealings of God's providence with mankind, and the base conduct, or wicked temper of mankind toward

God, one another, and themselves—declare if all the arguments laid before you, and cleared from the thickest clouds of objections that might obscure them, do not cast more light upon the black subject of our depravity than is sufficient to show that it is a melancholy truth—and finally pronounce, whether the doctrine of our corrupt and lost estate, stated in the words of the sacred writers, and of our pious reformers, is not rationally demonstrated and established upon the firmest basis in the world—matter of fact and the dictates of common sense.

FIFTH PART.

When a doctrine has been clearly demonstrated, the truths that necessarily spring from it can not reasonably be rejected. Let, then, common sense decide, whether the following consequences do not necessarily result from the doctrine of the fall, established in the preceding parts of this treatise.

Inference 1. If we are by nature in a corrupt and lost estate, the grand business of ministers is to rouse our drowsy consciences, and warn us of our imminent danger. It behooves them to cry aloud and spare not, to lift up their voice like a trumpet, and show us our transgressions and our sins. Nor are they to desist from this unpleasing part of their office till we

awake to righteousness, and lay hold on the hope set before us.

If preachers, under pretense of peace and good-nature, let the wound fester in the conscience of their hearers, to avoid the thankless office of probing it to the bottom—if, for fear of giving them pain by a timely amputation, they let them die of a mortification—or if they heal the hurt of the daughter of God's people slightly, saying, Peace! Peace! when there is no peace—they imitate those sycophants of old, who, for fear of displeasing the rich, and offending the great, preached smooth things, and prophesied deceit.

This cruel gentleness, this soft barbarity, is attended with the most pernicious consequences, and will deservedly meet with the most dreadful punishment. Give sinners warning from me, says the Lord to every minister; when I say to the wicked, the unconverted, Thou shalt surely die, and thou givest him not warning, he shall die in his iniquity, in his unconverted state; but his blood will I require at *thy* hand. See Matt. xviii, 3; Ezek. iii, 18, and xiii, 10.

INFERENCE 2. If we are naturally depraved and condemned creatures, self-righteousness and pride are the most absurd and monstrous of all our sins. The deepest repentance, and profoundest humility, become us. To neglect them, is to stumble at the very threshold of true religion; and to ridicule them is to pour contempt upon reason, revelation, and the first operations of divine grace on a sinner's heart.

INFERENCE 3. If the corruption of mankind is universal, inveterate, and amazingly powerful, no mere creature can deliver them from it. They must remain unrestored, or they must have an almighty, omniscient, omnipresent, unwearied, infinitely-patient Savior, willing, day and night, to attend to the wants and public or secret applications of millions of wretched souls, and able to give them immediate assistance throughout the world, in all their various trials, temptations, and the conflicts both in life and in death. Is the most exalted creature sufficient for these things?

When such a vast body as mankind, spread over all the earth for thousands of years, made up of numerous nations, all of which consist of multitudes of individuals, each of whom has the springs of all his faculties and powers enfeebled, disordered, or broken—when such an immense body as this is to be restored to the image of the infinitely-holy, glorious, and blessed God, common sense dictates that the amazing task can be performed by no other than the original Artist, the great Searcher of hearts, the omnipotent Creator of mankind.

Hence it appears, that, notwithstanding the cavils of Arius, the Savior is *God over all* blessed for ever; all things were made by him, he upholds all things by the word of his power, and every believer may adore him, and say with the wondering apostle, when the light of faith shone into his benighted soul, My Lord and my God!

Inference 4. If our guilt is immense, it can not be expiated without a sacrifice of an infinite dignity. Hence we discover the mistake of heathens and carnal Jews, who trusted in the sacrifices of beasts, the error of Deists, Mohammedans, and Socinians, who see no need of any expiatory sacrifice, and the amazing presumption of too many Christians, who repose a considerable part of their confidence in the proper merit of their works, instead of placing it entirely in the infinitely-meritorious sacrifice of the immaculate Lamb of God, humbly acknowledging that all the gracious rewardableness of the best works of faith is derived from his precious blood and original merit.

Inference 5. If our spiritual maladies are both numerous and mortal, it is evident we can not recover the spiritual health that we enjoyed in our first parents, but by the powerful help of our heavenly Physician, the second Adam. How absurd is it then to say, that we are saved, or recovered, by doing good works, without the quickening grace of a Savior!

A wretched beggar is lame, both in his hands and feet. An officious man, instead of taking him to a person famous for his skill in relieving such objects of distress, assures him that the only way of getting well is to run of errands for his prince, and work for his fellow-beggars. You justly wonder at the cruelty and folly of such a director, but you have much more reason to be astonished at the conduct of those miserable empirics who direct poor, blind, lame

sinners, laboring under a complication of spiritual disorders, and sick even to eternal death, to save themselves merely by serving God and doing good to their neighbors, as if they needed neither repentance toward God, nor faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, nor yet free grace to enable them to repent, believe, and serve God acceptably.

How much more rational is the evangelical method of salvation! We are saved, says the apostle, we are restored to saving health, and a spiritual activity to serve God and our neighbor, not by works, not of ourselves, but by grace, by mere favor, through faith, through such an entire confidence in our Physician as makes us gladly take his powerful remedies, abstain from the pleasing poison of sin, and feed on those divine truths which communicate angelical vigor and happiness to our souls, Eph. ii, 8.

INFERENCE 6. If our nature is so completely fallen, and totally helpless, that in spiritual things we are not sufficient of ourselves to think any thing truly good as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God, it is plain we stand in absolute need of his Spirit's assistance, to enable us to pray, repent, believe, love, and obey aright. Consequently, those who ridicule the Holy Spirit and his sacred influence, despise the great helper of our infirmities, and act a most irrational, wicked, and desperate part, Rom. viii, 26.

INFERENCE 7. If by nature we are really and truly born in sin, our regeneration can not be a mere metaphor, or a vain ceremony—our

spiritual birth must be real and positive. How fatal, therefore, is the mistake of those who suppose that the new birth is only a figurative expression for a decent behavior! How dreadful the error of those who imagine that all whose faces have been typically washed with material water in baptism, are now effectually born again of living water and the Holy Spirit! And how inexcusable the case of the multitudes, who, in the Church of England, are under this dangerous mistake, so prudently guarded against by our pious reformers!

In our catechism, they clearly distinguish between the outward, visible sign or form in baptism, and the inward, spiritual grace. And by defining the latter a death to sin, and a new birth to righteousness, they declare that whosoever is not dead or dying to sin, and alive to righteousness, is not truly regenerate, and has nothing of baptism but the outward and visible sign. In the twenty-seventh of our articles they mention, that baptism is not the new birth, but a *sign* of regeneration or new birth, whereby, as by an instrument, they who receive baptism rightly are grafted into the Church. And if our Church returns thanks for the regeneration of the infants whom she has admitted to baptism, it is chiefly* upon a charitable supposition that

* I say *chiefly*, because our Church gives thanks also for Christ's general grace and mercy to children, declaring herself persuaded of the good-will of our heavenly Father toward this [unbaptized] infant, through Christ, who said that of little children is the kingdom of heaven.

they have received it rightly, and will, for their part, faithfully perform the promises made for them by their sureties. If they refuse to do it when they come of age, far from treating them as her regenerate children, she denounces a general excommunication against them, and charges them not to come to her holy table, lest Satan bring them, as he did Judas, to destruction both of body and soul.

INFERENCE 8. If the fall of mankind in Adam does not consist in a capricious imputation of his personal guilt, but in a real, present participation of his depravity, impotence, and misery, the salvation that believers have in Christ is not a capricious imputation of his personal righteousness, but a real, present participation of his purity, power, and blessedness, together with pardon and acceptance.

Unspeakably dangerous, then, is the delusion of those whose brains and mouths are filled with the notions and expressions of imputed righteousness, while their poor, carnal, unregenerate hearts remain perfect strangers to the Lord, our righteousness.

INFERENCE 9. If the corrupt nature which sinners derive from Adam spontaneously produces all the wickedness that overspreads the earth, the holy nature which believers receive from Christ is also spontaneously productive of

The truth lies between the error of the Pelagians, who suppose that unbaptized infants are sinless, like angels, and that of the Papists, who affirm that they are graceless devils.

all the fruits of righteousness described in the oracles of God—good works springing out, *necessarily*,* of a true and lively faith.

Such ministers, therefore, as clearly preach our fall in Adam, and that faith in Christ which is productive of genuine holiness and active love, will infallibly promote good works and pure morality, when those who insist only upon works and moral duties will neither be zealous of good works themselves, nor instrumental in turning sinners from their gross immoralities. The reason is obvious: evangelical preachers follow their Lord's wise direction: Make the tree good, and the fruit shall be good also; but moralists will have corrupt trees bring forth good fruit, which, in the nature of things, is impossible, Matt. xiii, 33; Luke vi, 43. Therefore, as nothing but faith makes the tree good, and as without faith it is impossible to please God, the Christian that will come to him with good works must not only believe [as heathens] that he is, and that he is a rewarder of those who diligently seek him, but also that he was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, etc.

INFERENCE 10. If corruption and sin work so powerfully and sensibly in the hearts of the unregenerate, we may, without deserving the name of enthusiasts, affirm that the regenerate are sensible of the powerful effects of divine grace in their souls; or, to use the words of our

* This is to be understood of a moral, and not of an absolute, irresistible necessity; for faith never unmans the believer.

seventeenth article, we may say, They feel in themselves the workings of the Spirit of Christ; for, where the poison of sin hath abounded, and has been, of course, abundantly felt, grace, the powerful antidote that expels it, does much more abound, and, consequently, may be much more perceived.

Therefore, the knowledge of salvation by the forgiveness of sins, the assurance of faith, and the peace of God passing all understanding, are the *experienced* blessings of the converted, as certainly as a guilty conscience, the gnawing of worldly cares, the working of evil tempers, the tumults of unbridled appetites, and the uproars of rebellious passions, are the *experienced* curses of the unconverted.

Reader, if these inferences are justly drawn, is it not evident that the principles* generally exploded among us, as enthusiastical or methodistical, flow from the doctrine demonstrated in this treatise, as naturally as light from the sun? These consequences lead you perhaps farther than you could wish; but let them not make you either afraid or ashamed of the Gospel. Prejudices, like clouds, will vanish away; but

* Those doctrines, pointed out in the ten above-mentioned inferences, are, 1. The alarming severity of the law. 2. The need of a deep, heart-felt repentance. 3. The divinity of Christ. 4. The infinite merit of his sacrifice. 5. Salvation by faith in him. 6. The influence of his Holy Spirit. 7. The reality of the new birth. 8. The necessity of a present salvation. 9. The zeal of believers for good works; and, 10. The comfortable assurance which they have of their regeneration.

truth, which they obscure for a time, like the sun, will shine for ever. A great man in the law said, *Fiat justitia, ruat mundus.* Improve the noble sentiment, and say with equal fortitude, *Stet veritas, ruat mundus*—Let truth stand, though the universe should sink into ruins.

But, happily for us, the danger is all on the side of the opposite doctrine; and that you may be convinced of it, I present you next with a view of the

DREADFUL CONSEQUENCES NECESSARILY RESULTING FROM THE IGNORANCE OF OUR DEPRAVITY AND DANGER.

1. As the tempter caused the fall of our first parents, by inducing them to believe that they should not surely die if they broke the Divine law, so, now we are fallen, he prevents our recovery, by suggesting "the bitterness of death is past," and "we are in a state of safety." Hence it is that you sleep on in carnal security, O ye deluded sons of men, and even dream ye are safe and righteous. Nor can ye escape for your lives, till the vail of unbelief is taken away, and ye awake to a sight of your corrupt and lost estate; for there is no guarding against, nor flying from, an unseen, unsuspected evil. Here, as in a conspiracy, the danger continually increases, till it is happily discovered.

2. If we are not sensible of our natural corruption, and the justice of the curse entailed upon us on that account, can we help thinking God a tyrant, when he threatens unconverted

moralists with the severest of his judgments, or causes the black storms of his providence to overtake us and our dearest relatives?

Answer, ye self-righteous Pharisees, that so bitterly exclaim against the ministers who declare, by the authority of Scripture, that, Except ye repent, ye shall all perish. Answer, fond mother, whose tears of distraction mix with the cold sweat of the convulsed, dying infant on thy lap. Dost thou not secretly impeach divine Justice, and accuse Heaven of barbarity? Ah! if thou didst but know the evil nature which thou and thy Isaac have brought into the world; if thou sawest the root of bitterness which the hand of a gracious Providence even now extracts from his heart, far from being ready to curse God and die with thy child, thou wouldst patiently acquiesce in the kindly-severe dispensation, thou wouldst clear him when he is judged by such as thyself, and even glorify him in the evil day of this painful visitation.

3. Though man's heart is hardened as steel, it does not frequently emit the hellish sparks of such murmurings against God, because it can seldom be struck by the flint of such severe afflictions; yet the mischief is there, and will break out, if not by blasphemous despair, at least by its contrary—presumptuous madness. Yes, reader, unless thou art happily made acquainted with the strength of thy inbred depravity, thou wilt rashly venture among the sparks of temptation—with carnal confidence thou wilt ask, "What harm can they do me?" And thou

wilt continue the hazardous sport, till sin and wrath consume thee together. Nor will this be more surprising than that one who carries a bag of gunpowder, and knows not the dangerous nature of his load, should fearlessly rush through the midst of flames, or sparks, till he is blown up and destroyed.

4. This fatal rashness is generally accompanied with a glaring inconsistency. Do not you make the assertion good, ye saints of the present age, who pretend to have found the secret of loving both God and the world? Do not we hear you deny to men that you are condemned, and yet cry to God to have mercy upon you? But if you are not condemned, what need have you of mercy? And if you are, why do you deny your lost estate? Thou, too, reader, wilt fall into this absurdity, unless thou knowest thy just condemnation. But the mischief will not stop here; for,

5. Ignorance of the mystery of iniquity within you must, in the nature of things, cause you to neglect prayer, or to pray out of character. As unhumbled moralists, instead of approaching the throne of grace with the self-abasement of the penitent publican, saying, God be merciful to me, a sinner, you will provoke the Most High by the open profaneness of the Sadducee, or insult him by the self-conceited services of the Pharisee, boasting ye do no harm, and thanking God ye are not as other men. On these rocks your formal devotion will split, till you know, that, as the impenitent and prayerless

shall perish, so the Lord accepts no penitential prayer but that of the man who knows the plague of his own heart, because he alone prays in his own character, and without hypocrisy, 1 Pet. v, 5; 1 Kings viii, 38.

6. And as you can not approach the throne of grace aright, while you remain insensible of your corruption, so the reading or preaching of God's word, till it answers the end of conviction, is of no service to you, but rather proves, to use St. Paul's nervous expression, the savor of death unto death; for when the terrors of the law only suit your case, you vainly catch at the comforts of the Gospel, or, rather, you remain as unaffected under the threatenings of the one as under the promises of the other; you look on Mount Sinai and on Mount Sion with equal indifference, and the warmth of the preacher who invites you to fly from the wrath to come, appears to you an instance of religious madness. Nor is it a wonder it should, while you continue unacquainted with your danger; when a mortal disease is neither felt nor suspected, a pathetic address upon its consequences and cure must be received by any reasonable man with the greatest unconcern, and the person that makes it in earnest must appear exceedingly ridiculous. Again:

7. My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge, says the Lord. This is true, particularly with regard to the knowledge of our depravity. Reader, if thou remainest a stranger to it, thou wilt look upon slight confession of outward sins

as true repentance, and the godly sorrow, that worketh repentance to salvation, will appear to thee a symptom of melancholy. Taking an external reformation of manners, or a change of ceremonies and opinions, for true conversion, thou wilt think thyself in a safe state, while thy heart continues habitually wandering from God, and under the dominion of a worldly spirit. In a word, some of the branches of the tree of corruption thou mayest possibly lop off, but the root will still remain and gather strength; for it is plain that a bad root, supposed not to exist, can neither be heartily lamented, nor earnestly struck at with the ax of self-denial.

Even a heathen could say, "The knowledge of sin is the first step toward salvation from it; for he who knows not that he sins, will not submit to be set right; thou must find out what thou art before thou canst mend thyself; therefore, when thou discoverest thy vices, to which thou wast before a stranger, it is a sign that thy soul is in a better state."*

8. It is owing to the want of this discovery, O ye pretended sons of reason, that, thinking yourselves born pure, or supposing the diseases of your nature to be inconsiderable, you imagine it possible to be your own physicians, when you are only your own destroyers. Hence it

* Initium est salutis, notitia peccati, nam qui peccare se nescit corrigi non vult: Deprehendas te opportetet antequam emendes. Sen. Ep. xxviii.—Et hoc ipsum argumentum est in melius translati animi, quod vitia sua, quæ adhuc ignorabat, videt. Ep. vi.

is, that, while you give to Jesus the titular honor of Savior, you speak perpetually of being "saved merely by your duties and best endeavors." Hear him warning you against this common delusion: O Israel, says he, thou hast destroyed thyself, but in *me* is thy help found. The whole need not a physician, but they that are sick, beyond all hopes of recovering themselves.

9. The prescriptions of this wise Physician are excessively severe to flesh and blood, and some of his remedies as violent as our disease. Therefore, except we see the greatness of our danger, we shall beg to be excused from taking the bitter potion. Who can have resolution enough to cut off a right hand, pluck out a right eye, to take up his cross daily, to deny himself, and lose even his own life, or, what is often dearer, his fair reputation? Who, I say, can do this, till a sight of imminent ruin on the one hand, and of redeeming love on the other, makes him submit to the painful injunctions? Thou lovely youth, noted in the Gospel for thy harmlessness, I appeal to thy wretched experience. When the Physician of souls, at whose feet thou wast prostrate, commanded thee to sell all and follow him, what made thee go away sorrowful and undone? Not barely thy great possessions, but the ignorance of thy condition; for all that a man hath will he give for his life, when he sees it in immediate danger, Matt. xix, 22.

10. If it is a desperate step to turn away from the Prince of life, it is a daring one to approach

him with a mere compliment. Of this, nevertheless, you are guilty, ye unawakened sinners, who daily appear before the throne of grace, with thanks and praises to God for his inestimable love in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ. Alas! when you deny the state of sin and misery in which you are by nature, and yet presume to thank God for redemption from it, do you not mock him as solemnly as you would the king, were you to present him every day an address of thanks for redeeming you from Turkish slavery, when you never knew yourselves slaves in Turkey? O, how provoking to God must these unmeaning thanksgivings be! Surely, one day, they will be ranked among the indignities offered by earthly worms to the Majesty on high.

11. Some, indeed, more consistent than you, openly throw off the mask. Seeing neither the unfathomable depth of their misery by the fall, nor the immense hight of their aggravated iniquities, they do not trifle with, but at once deny, the Lord that bought them. Yes, far from admiring the established method of a salvation procured at so immense a price as the incarnation and crucifixion of the Son of God, they are not afraid to intimate it is irrational; and upon their principle they may well do it, for, if our ruin is not immense, what need is there for an immensely-glorious Redeemer? And if our guilt reaches not up to heaven, why should the Son of God have come down from thence, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself?

12. As we slight or reject the Savior, till we are truly convinced of the evil and danger of sin, so we worship a false god—a mere idol; for, instead of adoring Jehovah, infinite in his holiness and hatred of sin, inviolable in the truth of his threatenings against it, and impartial in his strict justice—a God in whose presence unhumbled sinners are not able to stand, and with whom evil can not dwell, we bow to a strange god, whom pious men never knew—a god formed by our own fancy, so unholy as to connive at sin, so unjust as to set aside his most righteous law, and so false as to break his solemn word, that we must turn or die, Ezek. xxxiii, 11. Is not this worshiping a god of our own making? or, as David describes him, a god altogether such as ourselves? To adore an idol of paste, made by the baker and the priest, may be indeed more foolish, but can not be more wicked, than to adore one made by our wild imagination and impious unbelief.

13. We may go one step farther still, and affirm, that, till we are deeply convinced of sin, far from worshiping the true God—which implies knowing, loving, and admiring him in all his perfections—we hate and oppose him in his infinite holiness and justice. The proof is obvious: two things diametrically opposite in their nature can never be approved of at once. If we do not side with divine Holiness and Justice, abhor our corruption, and condemn ourselves as hell-deserving sinners, far from approving, we shall rise against the holy and righteous

God, who sentences us to eternal death for our sin: we shall at least wish he were less pure and just than he is; which amounts to wishing him to be no God. While proud fiends betray this horrid disposition by loud blasphemies in hell, ye do it, O ye unconvinced sons of men, by your aversion to godliness upon earth. Haters of God is, then, the proper name, and enmity against him the settled temper, of all unhumbled, unconverted sinners, Rom. i, 30, and viii, 7.

14. When the nature of God is mistaken, what wonder if his law is misapprehended? The law is good, says St. Paul, if a man use it lawfully; but if we make an improper use of it, the consequence is fatal. Since the fall, the law of God, as contradistinguished from the Gospel of Christ, points out to us the spotless holiness and inflexible justice of its divine Author. It teaches us with what ardor and constancy we should love both our Creator and our fellow-creatures. As a bank cast against the stream of our iniquity, it accidentally serves to make it rise the higher, and to discover its impetuosity; for by the law is the knowledge of sin. It demonstrates man's weakness, who consents, indeed, to the law that is good, but finds not how to fulfill it, Rom. vii, 16, 19. As a battery erected against our pride, when it has its due effect, it silences all our self-righteous pleas, and convinces us that a returning sinner is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Christ; a broken law—a law which

worketh wrath, being absolutely unable to absolve its violator. In a word, it is our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ, and drives us with the rod of threatening punishments, to make us touch the scepter of mercy held out to us from the throne of grace.

But while we remain strangers to our helpless and hopeless state by nature, far from making this proper use of the law, we trust in it, and fancy that the merit of our unsprinkled obedience to it is the way of salvation. Thus we go about to establish our own righteousness, making light of the atoning blood which marks the new and living way to heaven. This very mistake ruined the Pharisees of old, and destroys their numerous followers in all ages, Rom. ix, 31.

15. And when we form such wrong apprehensions of the law, is it possible that we should have right views of the Gospel, and receive it with cordial affection? Reason and experience answer in the negative. What says the Gospel to sinners? You are saved *by grace*, through mere favor and mercy, not by the covenant of works, lest any man should boast, like the Pharisee, Eph. ii, 8. Now, ye decent formalists, ye fond admirers of your own virtue, are you not utterly disqualified to seek and accept a pardon in the Gospel way? for your seeking it upon the footing of mere mercy, implies an acknowledgment that you deserve the ruin threatened against sinners. And supposing a pardon were granted you, before you had a con-

sciousness of your sad deserts, you could not receive it as an act of mere grace, but only as a reward justly bestowed upon you for the merit of your works. It is plain, then, that, according to the Gospel plan, none can be fit subjects of salvation but those who are truly sensible of their condemnation.

16. But as the grace of God in Christ is the original and properly-meritorious cause of our salvation, so the grand, instrumental cause of it is faith on our part. Through faith are ye saved, says St. Paul. Now, if to have faith in Christ is habitually to lift up our hearts to him with a humble, and yet cheerful confidence, seeking in him all our wisdom, righteousness, and strength, as being our instructing prophet, atoning priest, and protecting king, it is evident, that, till we awake to a sight of our fallen state, we can not believe, nor, consequently, be saved. O, ye that never were sensible of your spiritual blindness, can you with sincerity take Jesus for your guide, and desire his Spirit to lead you into all truth? Does not David's prayer, "Open thou mine eyes, that I may see the wonderful things of thy law," appear to you needless, if not fanatical? And is not the Redeemer's prophetic office thrown away upon such sons of wisdom as you are?

Have you a greater value for Jesus than they, O, ye just men, who have no sensible need of heart-felt repentance, and whose breasts were never dilated by one sigh under a due sense of your guilt and condemnation? Can you, with-

out hypocrisy, apply to him as the high priest of the guilty, claim him as the advocate of the condemned, or fly to him as the Savior of the lost? Impossible! Ye fondly hope ye never were lost—ye were always "good livers, good believers, good Churchmen"—ye need not make so much ado about an interest in the blood of the new covenant.

And ye who, flushed with the conceit of your native strength, wonder at the weakness of those that continually bow to the scepter of Jesus' grace for protection and power, can you, without a smile of pity, hear him say, "Without me ye can do nothing?" Is it possible that you should sincerely implore the exertion of his royal power for victory over sins, which you suppose yourselves able to conquer, and for the restoration of a nature, with the goodness of which you are already so well satisfied? Your reason loudly answers, No. Therefore, till you see yourselves corrupt, impotent creatures, you will openly neglect the Redeemer, give to your aggravated sins the name of "human frailties," and trust to your baffled, and yet boasted endeavors. Self-deception! Art thou not of all impostors the most common and dangerous, because the least suspected?

To sum up and close these important remarks: Look at those who, in mystic Babylon, are not truly sensible of their total fall from God, and you will see them setting their own reason above the holy Scriptures, and their works in competition with the infinitely-meritorious sacrifice of

Christ. Inquire into their principles, and you will discover that they either openly explode as enthusiastical, or slightly receive, as unnecessary, the doctrines of salvation by faith in Christ, and regeneration by the Spirit of God. Examine their conduct, and you will find they all commit sin, and receive the mark of the beast secretly in the right hand, or openly in their foreheads, Rev. xiii, 16. Sort them, and you will have two bands, the one of skeptics and the other of formalists, who, though at as great enmity between themselves as Pilate and Herod, are, like them, made friends together by jointly deriding and condemning Jesus in his living members.

And if, with the candle of the Lord, you search the Jerusalem of professing Christians, you will perceive that the want of a heart-felt, humbling knowledge of their natural depravity, gives birth to the double-mindedness of hypocrites, and the miscarriages or apostasy of those who once distinguished themselves in the evangelical race; you will easily trace back to the same corrupt source the seemingly-opposite errors of the loose Antinomian, and the Pharisaic legalist, those spiritual thieves by whom the sincere Christian is perpetually reviled; and, in short, you will be convinced, that, if you set your eyes upon a man who is not yet deeply conscious of his corrupt and lost estate, or whose consciousness of it has worn away, you behold either a trifler in religion, a dead-hearted Pharisee, a sly hypocrite, a loose Antinomian, a self-conceited formalist, a scoffing infidel, or a wretched apostate.

You see, reader, what a train of fatal consequences result from rejecting, or not properly receiving, the doctrine demonstrated in these sheets; and now that you may cordially embrace it, permit me to enumerate the

UNSPEAKABLE ADVANTAGES

SPRINGING FROM AN AFFECTING KNOWLEDGE OF OUR FALLEN AND LOST ESTATE.

No sooner is the disease rightly known, than the neglected Jesus, who is both our gracious Physician and powerful remedy, is properly valued, and ardently sought. All that thus seek, find; and all that find him, find saving health, eternal life, and heaven.

Bear your testimony with me, ye children of Abraham and of God, who see the brightness of a Gospel day, and rejoice. Say, what made you first wishfully look to the hills, whence your salvation is come, and fervently desire to behold the sin-dispelling beams of the Sun of righteousness? Was it not the deep, dismal night of our fallen nature, which you happily discovered when, awakening from the sleep of sin, you first saw the delusive dreams of life, as they appear to the dying? What was the Desire of nations to you till you felt yourselves lost sinners? Alas! nothing—perhaps less than nothing—an object of disgust or scorn. When the pearl of great price was presented to you, did you regard it more than the vilest of brutes an oriental pearl? and, as if it had not been enough to look at it with disdain, were not some of you ready to turn

again, and rend, after the example of snarling animals, those who affectionately made you the invaluable offer? Matt. vii, 6.

But when the storm that shook Mount Sinai overtook your careless souls, and ye saw yourselves sinking into an abyss of misery, did ye not cry out, and say, as the alarmed disciples, with an unknown energy of desire, "Save, Lord, or we perish?" And when conscious of your lost estate, ye began to believe that he came to seek and to save that which was lost, how dear, how precious was he to you in all his offices! How glad were you to take guilty, weeping, Magdalen's place, and wait for a pardon at your High Priest's feet! How importunate in saying to your King, as the hapless widow, Lord, avenge me of mine adversary, my evil heart of unbelief! How earnest, how unwearied in your applications to your Prophet for heavenly light and wisdom! The incessant prayer of blind Bartimeus was then yours, and so was the gracious answer which the Lord returned to him; you received your spiritual sight. And O! what saw you then? The sacred book unsealed! Your sins blotted out as a cloud! The glory of God shining in the face of Jesus Christ; and "the kingdom of heaven opened to all believers!"

Then, and not till then, you could say from the heart, This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the chief, 1 Tim. i, 15. Then you could cry out with his first disciples, Behold what manner of

love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God! 1 John iii, 1. We are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus, whom, having not seen, we love; in whom, though now we see him not, yet believing, we rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory, receiving the end of our faith, the salvation of our souls, Gal. iii, 26; 1 Peter i, 8. We trusted in him, and are helped; therefore our heart danced for joy, and in our song will we praise him, Psa. xxviii, 8. To him that hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever, Rev. i, 5.

And this will also be your triumphant song, attentive reader, if, deeply conscious of your lost estate, you spread your guilt and misery before Him who came to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; and to comfort all that mourn, by giving them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness, Isa. lxi, 1. Your sorrow, it is true, may endure for a night, but joy will come in the morning, the joy of God's salvation, and the pardon of your sins. Having much forgiven you, you will then love much, and admire in proportion, the riches of divine Wisdom, Goodness, Justice, and Power, that so graciously contrived, and so wonderfully executed the plan of your redemption. You will be ravished in ex-

periencing that a condemned sinner can not only escape impending ruin, but enter into present possession of a spiritual paradise, where peace and joy blossom together, and whence welcome death, will, erelong, translate your triumphant soul to those unseen, unheard-of, inconceivable glories, which God hath prepared for them that love him, 1 Cor. ii, 9.

Nor will the blossoms of heavenly peace and joy only diffuse their divine fragrancy in your soul; all the fruits of holiness will grow together with them, to the glory of God, and the profit of mankind. And thou wilt not be the last, thou fair, thou blushing humility, to bend all the spreading branches of pride to the tree of righteousness. No, we can not be vain, or despisers of others, when we see that we are all corrupted, dying shoots, of the same corrupted, dead stalk; we can not be self-righteous, when we are persuaded that the best fruit which we can naturally produce, is only splendid sin, or vice colored over with the specious appearance of virtue: we must lie prostrate in the dust, when we consider the ignominious cross, where our divine Surety hung, bled, and died, to ransom our guilty souls.

A genuine conviction of our corruption and demerit thus striking at the very root of our pride, necessarily fills our hearts with inexpressible gratitude for every favor we receive, gives an exquisite relish to the least blessing we enjoy, and teaches us to say with the thankful patriarch, I am not worthy of the least of all thy mercies: and as it renders us grateful to God, and all

our benefactors, so it makes us patient under the greatest injuries, resigned in the heaviest trials, glad to be reproved, willing to forgive the faults of others, open to acknowledge our own, disposed to sympathize with the guilty, tender-hearted toward the miserable, incapable of being offended at any one, and ready to do every office of kindness, even to the meanest of mankind.

Again: no sooner are we properly acquainted with our helplessness, than we give over leaning on an arm of flesh, and the broken reed of our own resolutions. Reposing our entire confidence in the living God, we fervently implore his continual assistance, carefully avoid temptations, gladly acknowledge that the help which is done upon the earth the Lord doeth it himself, and humbly give him the glory of all the good that appears in ourselves and others.

Once more: as soon as we can discover our spiritual blindness, we mistrust our own judgment, feel the need of instruction, modestly repair to the experienced for advice, carefully search the Scriptures, readily follow their blessed directions, and fervently pray that no false light may mislead us out of the way of salvation.

To conclude: a right knowledge that the crown is fallen from our head, will make us abominate sin, the cause of our ruin, and raise in us a noble ambition of regaining our original state of blissful and glorious righteousness. It will set us upon an earnest inquiry into, and a proper use of, all the means conducive to our

recovery. Even the sense of our guilt will prove useful, by helping to break our obdurate hearts, by imbittering the baits of worldly vanities, and filling our souls with penitential sorrow. Before honor is humility. This happy humiliation makes way for the greatest exaltation; for thus saith the high and lofty One, that inhabiteth eternity: "I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and the heart of the contrite, to fill the hungry with good things, and beautify the meek with salvation," Isaiah lvii, 15.

If these advantages, which exceed the worth of earthly crowns, necessarily result from the proper knowledge of our corrupt and lost estate, who, but an infatuated enemy of his own soul, would be afraid of that self-science? who but an obstinate Pharisee would not esteem it, next to the knowledge of Christ, the greatest blessing which Heaven can bestow upon the self-destroyed, and yet self-conceited children of men? Careless reader, if thou art the person—if, remaining unshaken in thy carnal confidence, and supposing thyself wiser than seven men that can render a reason, thou not only despisest the testimony of the sacred writers, and our pious reformers, laid before thee in the first part of this treatise, but disregardest the numerous arguments it contains, tramplest under foot both matter of fact and common sense, and remainest unaffected by the most dreadful consequences of self-ignorance on the one hand, and by the

greatest advantages of self-knowledge on the other, I have done, and must take my leave of thee.

May the merciful and holy God, whose laws thou dost daily violate, whose word thou hourly opposest or forgettest, whose salvation thou dost every moment neglect, whose vengeance thou continually provokest, and whose cause I have attempted to plead, bear with thee and thy insults a little longer! May his infinite patience yet afford thee some means of conviction more effectual than that which is at present in thy hands! Or, shouldst thou look into this labor of love once more, may it then answer a better purpose than to aggravate thy guilt, and enhance thy condemnation, by rendering the folly of thy unbelief more glaring, and, consequently, more inexcusable!

END OF THE APPEAL.

ADDRESS

TO SUCH AS INQUIRE, WHAT MUST WE DO TO BE SAVED?

SERIOUS READER,—Having taken my leave of the thoughtless gay, who regard an appeal to their reason as little as they do the warnings of their conscience, I return to thee, serious and well-disposed reader.* I am too much concerned for thy soul's welfare, to lay down my pen without showing thee more perfectly the way to the kingdom of heaven, by testifying to thee "repentance toward God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ."

Thou art happily weary of feeding upon the husks of earthly vanities. I have a right, therefore, as a steward of the mysteries of God, to bring out of the divine treasury the pearls of evangelical truth; and I gladly cast them before *thee,* persuaded that, far from awakening thy anger, they will excite thy desires, animate thy languid hopes.

* This address was first published by the late Rev. Mr. Fletcher, at the close of his *Appeal to Matter of Fact, etc.*, and is only calculated for *serious persons*, who cordially assent to the doctrine established in the *Rational Demonstration of our Fallen and Lost Estate.* As other readers have been dismissed with the portion of truth that belongs to them, they are desired not to meddle with *this*, lest their cavils confirm St. Paul's observation, *We preach Christ crucified, to the* self-righteous *Jews a stumbling block*, and *to the* self-conceited *Greeks foolishness.*

Instead of ridiculing, or dreading a heart-felt conviction of thy lost estate, thou now seest it is a desirable privilege, an invaluable blessing. Ready to mourn, because thou canst not mourn, thou complainest that thou hast only a confused view of thy total depravity. Thou wantest the feelings of the royal penitent, when he said, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity," etc. "I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me;" but, conscious thou canst not raise them in thy heart by natural powers, thou desirest some Scriptural directions suitable to thy case. Give me leave to introduce them by a few

Preliminary Reflections

On the nature and depth of penitential sorrow.

I. Thou knowest, that "except thou [truly] repentest, thou shalt [surely] perish;" and that there is no true repentance, where there is not true sorrow for sin. "I rejoice," says St. Paul to the Corinthians, "that ye were made sorry after a godly manner: for godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation, not to be repented of; but the sorrow of the world worketh death." Hence it appears that there are two sorts of sorrow, springing from opposite sources, *God* and *the world;* the one *a godly sorrow*, and the other *the sorrow of the world*. Learn, then, to distinguish them by their various causes and effects; so shalt thou avoid the danger of mistaking the one for the other.

The sorrow of the world, which many cover

with the cloak of religon, arises from fear of contempt, dread of poverty, secret jealousy, revenge dissatisfied, love disappointed, baffled schemes, losses in business, unkindness of friends, provocation of enemies, or the death of some idolized relative. Nay, this sorrow may sometimes spring from a mixture of self-righteous pride and slavish fear. Some can not bear to be robbed of their fond hopes of meriting heaven by their imaginary good works: they lose all patience, when they see their best righteousness brought to light and exposed as *filthy rags;* they are cut to the heart, when they hear that their apparent good deeds deserve punishment, as well as their black enormities; or, like condemned malefactors, they dread the consequences of their crimes, while they feel little or no horror for the crimes themselves.

Exceedingly fatal are the effects of this sorrow, in the persons whom it overcomes; their indignant hearts, unable to bear either disappointment, contradiction, or condemnation, rise against second causes, or against the decrees of Providence; fret at the strictness of the law, or holiness of the Lawgiver, and pine away with uninterrupted discontent.

Hence, spurning at advice, direction, and consolation, they wring their hands or gnaw their tongues with anguish; impatience works them up into stupid sullenness or noisy murmuring; they complain that their "punishment is greater than they can bear;" and, imagining they are more severely dealt with than others, they hastily

conclude, "Behold this evil is from the Lord, why should I wait for him any longer?" Thus black despair seizes upon their spirits; and, if grace does not interpose, they either live on to fill up the measure of their iniquities, as Cain, Pharoah, and Haman, or madly lay violent hands upon themselves, as Ahithophel and Judas did.

This sorrow can not be too much guarded against, as it not only destroys many persons, but does immense hurt to religion. For those who are glad of any pretense to pour contempt upon godliness, taking occasion from the instances of this sorrow, harden their own hearts, and prejudice all around them against the blessed *godly* sorrow, which every minister of the Gospel endeavors to excite, maliciously representing it as one and the same with the mischievous *sorrow of the world*.

Their mistake will be evident, if we trace godly sorrow back to its source. It does not spring merely from fear of punishment, but chiefly from humbling views of God's holiness, the impurity of the human nature, the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and the transcendent excellency of the law, which condemns the sinner.

And this happy sorrow differs not less from the other in its effects, than it does in its cause. The persons who are blessed with it, far from murmuring or fretting at the Divine commandment, see it to be "holy, just, and good," both in its perceptive and penal part. They so absolutely acquiesce in it, that they would not alter it if they could. They clear God, accuse them-

selves, subscribe their own sentence, and acknowledge, "It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed." Each of them can say, "Wherefore should a living man complain—a man for the punishment of his sins? It is good that he should both hope and quietly wait for God's salvation; I will therefore watch to see what he will say to me, for he will speak peace to his people." Thus, in a constant use of all the ordinances of God, they meekly wait, wrestling with their unbelieving fears, till victorious "faith comes by hearing" of the matchless love of Jesus Christ; and then, "fearing the Lord and his goodness," they "sing the song of the Lamb," and run upon his delightful errands.

As thou seest, serious reader, the nature, necessity, and excellence of *godly sorrow*, thou art probably desirous of being informed how deep thine must be, to constitute thee a *true* penitent. Know, then, that it must be deep enough to imbitter thy most pleasing, profitable, and habitual sins, and to prevent thy resting without a clear sense of thy peculiar interest in Christ. It must be profound enough to make him and his Gospel infinitely precious to thee, and to produce, under God, the blessed effects mentioned in the fifth part of the preceding treatise.

To be more particular, a true penitent may certainly, without despair or madness, go as far in godly sorrow, as David does in his penitential psalms, or our Church in the first part of the homily on fasting: "When good men," says she,

"feel in themselves the heavy burden of sin, see damnation to be the reward of it, and behold with the eye of their mind the horror of hell, they tremble, they quake, they are inwardly touched with the sorrowfulness of heart for their offenses, and can not but accuse themselves, and open their grief to almighty God, and call on him for mercy. This being done seriously, their mind is so occupied, partly with sorrow and heaviness, partly with an earnest desire to be delivered from this danger of hell and damnation, that all desire of meat and drink is laid aside, and loathing of all worldly things and pleasures comes in place; so that they like nothing better than to weep, to lament, to mourn, and both with words and behavior of body, to show themselves weary of this life."

Nevertheless, it must be observed that godly sorrow needs not to be equal, either in degree or duration, in all penitents. Those whose hearts, through divine grace, open as readily and gently as that of Lydia, happily avoid many of David's pangs and Job's terrors. The powerful and instantaneous, or the gentle and gradual manner, in which souls are awakened; the difference of constitutions; the peculiar services that a few are called to, and for which they are prepared by peculiar exercises; the horrid aggravations that have attended the sins of some; and the severe correction which the Lord is obliged to give others, for their stout resistance against his grace; all this may help us to account for the various depths of distress through which

different penitents pass in their way to Christ and salvation.

The Lord does not needlessly afflict the children of men, any more than a tender father unnecessarily corrects his disobedient children: he only wants us to forsake our sins, renounce our own imaginary righteousness, and come to Christ to be made partakers of his merits, holiness, and felicity. The sorrow which answers these ends is quite sufficient, though it should be ever so light, and of ever so short a duration. On the contrary, a distress as heavy as that of Judas is unavailable, if, instead of driving us from sin to Jesus Christ, it only drives us from profaneness to hypocrisy, or from presumption to despair.

If still perplexed, thou askest what thou must do to get a sense of thy depravity, productive of true repentance, I answer, that an affecting discovery of the guilt, nature, and danger of sin, is only attained by the assistance of God's Spirit, who alone effectually "convinces the world of sin," John xvi, 8. But the Lord has graciously appointed means, in the right use of which he never denies a sinner the convincing and converting power of his blessed Spirit; and what they are, thou art informed in the following

DIRECTIONS,

Proper for a half-awakened sinner, desirous of being duly convinced of his corrupt and lost estate.

II. Beware of fools, that make a mock at

sorrow for sin, and at *sin* itself. Beware of those "blind leaders of the blind," who, "having a form of godliness, deny the power thereof;" instead of pointing thee to the throne of grace, and bidding thee "behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world," they will only direct thee to the church walls and communion table; and, perhaps, if they see thee under dejection of spirit for thy sins, they will recommend the play-house, the card-table, or what they call a cheerful glass. "From such turn away," or they will persuade thee that repentance is melancholy, conviction of sin despair, and the love of God enthusiasm, 2 Tim. iii, 5.

That they may not be able to laugh or frown thee out of the way of salvation, dwell in thy thoughts on God's awful perfections. "Justice and judgment are the habitation of his throne." The unspotted, resplendent holiness beaming forth from him, as from an immensely-glorious Sun of righteousness, will show thee thy sins as innumerable as the flying motes discovered in a dusty room where the natural sun can penetrate. Consider that they are committed by a worm of earth against the Majesty of heaven, and they will all appear to be infinitely great, especially if thou measurest them and thyself by the true rule—the oracles of God—casting away the three false standards which self-deceivers measure themselves by; namely, the good opinion of their worldly-minded neighbors, the defective examples of their fellow-sinners, and the

flattering suggestions of their own blind self-love.

Follow the example of the noble Bereans: "Search the Scriptures daily, whether these things are so," Acts xvii, 11. View, in that faithful mirror, the picture both of the natural and of the regenerate man, and ask thy conscience which thou resemblest most. If, imitating the godly man described in the first Psalm, thou "meditatest in the law of the Lord day and night," the straightness of the heavenly rule will soon show thee how very far gone thy thoughts, words, actions, tempers, and nature are from original righteousness.

To this meditation add a frequent survey of the follies of thy childhood, the vanity of thy youth, the worldly-mindedness of thy riper years, the capital transgressions which conscience accuses thee of, and the "hardness of heart," and alienation from the life of God, that the Scriptures charge thee with. Confess all to the Lord as thou art able, remembering that "the wages of sin is death," who flies fast upon thee with the wings of time—death, who often gives no warning, and ushers in *judgment*, with all the horrors of *hell*, or the joys of *heaven*, and pray that these awful realities may affect thee now, as they will in thy last moments.

Frequently reflect, how total must be our loss of spiritual life, which can not be repaired but by a *resurrection*, a *new birth*, or a *new creation*, Col. iii, 1; John iii, 7; Gal. vi, 5. And how desperate the disease of our fallen nature, which

can not be healed but with the blood of a divine Physician. Consider, attentively consider HIM, whose piercing look softened the obdurate heart of cursing Peter, whose amazing sufferings brought a hardened thief under the deepest concern for his salvation, and whose dying groans rent the rocks, shook the earth, and opened the graves. The tender flower of evangelical sorrow grows best in the shade of his cross; a believing view of him, as suffering for thee, will melt thee into penitential tears, and seal upon thy relenting heart the gracious promise, "They shall look upon him whom they have pierced, and mourn," Zech. xii, 10.

In the mean time, improve the daily opportunities which thou hast of studying human corruption in the life and tempers of all around thee, but chiefly in thy own careless and deceitful heart; take notice of its pride and self-seeking, of its risings and secret workings, especially when unexpected temptations trouble thy imaginary peace of mind; for at such a time thy corruption, like the sediment in the bottom of a vial that is shaken, will show its loathsomeness and strength.

Converse frequently, if thou canst, with persons deeply convinced of sin. Attend a plain, heart-searching ministry as often as possible; and when the sword of the Spirit, the word of God, pierces thy soul, beware of fretful impatience. Instead of rising with indignation against the preacher, and saying, as proud Ahab did to the man of God, "Hast thou found me, O mine

enemy?" account him thy best friend that wounds the deepest, provided he brings thee to Christ for a cure; and when the arrows of the word fly abroad, drop the shield of unbelief, make bare thy breast, welcome the blessed shaft, and remember, that the only way of conquering sin is to fall wounded and helpless at the Redeemer's feet.

Nevertheless, the impressions of the word will soon wear off, if thou dost not importunately entreat the Searcher of hearts to light the candle of his grace in thy soul, that thou mayest clearly see whether thy inward parts are "holiness to the Lord," as thou fondly supposedst, or very wickedness, as the Scripture testifies. It is only in God's light that we can clearly discover our blindness.

This light, it is true, "shineth in darkness," but frequently "the darkness comprehendeth it not." That this be not thy dreadful case, do not grieve and quench the convincing Spirit, by persisting in thy willful omission of any duty, or deliberate commission of any sin—nothing but obstinate unbelief darkens the mind and hardens the heart more than this. Therefore, instead of burying thy one talent with the slothful servant, earnestly pray the Lord to make thee faithful to thy convictions, and to deepen them daily, till they end in a sound conversion.

In order to this, do not slightly heal the wound in thy conscience—it is better to keep it open, than to skin it over by improper means—many, through a natural frowardness and impatience,

have recourse to them, and ruin is the consequence of their mistake. That thou mayest avoid it, serious reader, I entreat thee to pay a due regard to the following

CAUTIONS,

Proper for a penitent, who desires to make his calling and election SURE.

III. When thou hast affecting views of thy lost estate, beware of resting, like Felix, in some pangs of fear, fits of trembling, and resolutions of turning to God by and by, when thou shalt have a convenient season. Neither give place to desponding thoughts, as if there were no appeal from the tribunal of justice to the throne of grace.

Run not for ease to vain company, bodily indulgence, entangling affections, immoderate sleep, excessive drinking, or hurry of business. Cain built a city to divert his trouble of mind, and multitudes, like him, by "the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, or the desire of other things," daily choke the good seed, the precious *word* of conviction, Mark iv, 19.

Be not satisfied with faint desires of living the life of the righteous, or idle wishes of dying their death. Remember that "the desire of the slothful kills him," and if thou hast experienced some drawings of grace, meltings of heart, or breathings after God, sit not down at last, as the Laodiceans, in a careless state, "neither hot nor cold." It is far better to go on thy way weeping, and seeking "the pearl of great price," till

thou really find it, than to rest contented with a hasty conceit that thou art possessed of it, when thou art not.

Stop not in an outward reformation, and a form of godliness, like many, who mistake the means or doctrines of grace for grace itself, and because they say their heartless prayers both in public and private, or go far and often to hear the Gospel preached in its purity, fondly hope that they are the favorites of God, and in the highway to heaven.

Under pretense of increasing thy convictions, do not bury them in heaps of religious books. Some read till their heads are confused, or their hearts past feeling. Thus, though "ever learning, they are never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." *Hear*, then, as well as *read* the word of life, but think not thyself converted when thou hast "received it with joy:" the stony-ground hearers went as far as this; Herod himself "heard John gladly, honored him, did many things," but left the most important undone; for he never dismissed the incestuous woman he lived with, and at last sacrificed to her revenge the honest preacher he once admired.

Do not confound the covenant of works made with innocent Adam before the fall, and the covenant of grace made with sinful Adam after the fall, Gen. ii, 17, and iii, 15, and Rom. v, 11–21. They are excellent in their place; but when they are mixed together, they destroy each other's efficacy. The dreadful thunders heard in Paradise Lost, and the melodious songs uttered

in Paradise Regained, do not strike at once the spiritual ear. The galling yoke of the law of works, and the heavy load of its condemnation, are dropped when we take upon us Christ's easy yoke, and submit to his light burden. In a word, the first Adam gives place to the second, when we "find rest unto our souls." Let, then, the *curse* of the law of innocence be swallowed by the *blessing* of the Gospel, or, rather, let it make way for the grace of Christ in thy soul, as an emetic makes way for a cordial in a disordered stomach. If thou takest them together, their respective use is prevented. The first covenant loses its *humbling* efficacy, and the second its *restorative* power. Therefore, if thou hast really "received the sentence of death in thyself," leave the curse of the first covenant in the grave of Christ, "crucified for thy sins," and welcome the pardoning, renovating grace of Christ, "risen again for thy justification."

On the other hand, rest not contented with speculative knowledge, and unaffecting, though clear ideas of the Gospel way of salvation. Light in an unrenewed understanding, mistaken for "the mystery of faith in a pure heart," like an ignis fatuus, or false light, leads thousands through the bogs of sin, into the pit of destruction, Acts viii, 13.

Pacify not thy conscience by activity in outward services, and a warmth in God's cause; party spirit, or natural steadiness in carrying on a favorite scheme, yea, or seeking thy own glory, may be the springs that set thee on work. Jehu

faithfully destroyed Baal and Jezebel, but his zeal for the Lord covered the secret desire of a crown. Take care also not to mistake gifts for graces, fluency of speech for converting power, the warmth of natural affection for divine love, or an impulse of God's Spirit, on some particular occasion, for an evidence of spiritual regeneration. Balaam spoke and prophesied like a child of God, and many will one day say to Christ, "Lord, have we not prophesied, spoke all mysteries, cast out devils, and done many wonderful works in thy name?" to whom he will answer, "Depart from me, I know you not."

Avoid the self-conceit of many who feed on the corrupted manna of their past experiences, and confidently appeal to the wasted streams of those consolations which once refreshed their hearts; when, alas! it is evident, "they have now forsaken the Fountain of living water, and hewn to themselves broken cisterns that hold no water;" unless the mire of evil tempers, selfish views, and heartless professions of faith, may pass for "the streams which make glad the city of God."

Neither do thou heal thyself by touches of sorrow, by tears, good desires, or outward marks of humiliation for sin, as King Ahab. Nor by excessive fasting, retiring from business, or hard usage of the body, as many Roman Catholics; nor yet by misapplying the doctrine of predestination, and setting down notions of election for evidences of salvation, as many Protestants; no, nor by "doting about questions, strife of words,

and perverse disputings, which eat as a canker," as some in St. Paul's days, and too many in ours, 1 Tim. vi, 4.

To conclude: think not thou art absolutely made whole, when the power of outward sin is weakened or suspended, when thou hast learned the language of Canaan, canst speak or write well on spiritual subjects, art intimately acquainted with the best ministers of Christ, and hast cast thy lot among the despised children of God, taken their part, shared in their reproach, and secured their esteem and prayers. Judas did so for years, Saul was once also among the prophets, Ananias and Sapphira were supposed to be good believers for a time, the foolish virgins joined in society with the wise, and were, perhaps, unsuspected to the last, and Peter himself stood in need of *conversion*, long after he had outwardly "left all to follow Christ," Luke xxii, 32. So important is that charge of our Lord, "Strive to enter in at the strait gate; for many will seek to enter in, and shall not be able."

To these cautions against the various ways by which the generality of penitents skin over the wound of sin in their conscience, permit me to add an

EVANGELICAL EXHORTATION,

Pointing out the Divine method of a sound cure, which, though least regarded, and last tried, by most sinners, is not only effectual in some, but infallible in ALL *cases.*

IV. Wouldst thou, serious reader, be made

whole in an evangelical manner? To thy convictions of original and actual sin, must be added a conviction of unbelief. Feel, then, that thou hast neglected Christ's great salvation; own thou didst never ask, or never persevere in asking, the unfeigned, saving, powerful faith, by which the atonement is received and enjoyed, Rom. v. 11. Acknowledge that the faith thou hast hitherto rested in, was not that gift of God, that grace "of his own operation, wrought in thee according to the working of his mighty power," and mentioned Eph. ii, 8; Col. ii, 12; Eph. i, 19. And confess it was not the right Christian faith, because it chiefly grew from the seed of prejudice and education, as the faith of Jews and Turks, and not from the seed of divine grace and power, as the faith of St. Paul, Gal. i, 15; and because it never yielded the heavenly fruits which Gospel faith infallibly produces, such as a vital union with Christ, Gal. ii, 20, "the pardon of sins," Col. i, 14; Acts xiii, 30; "peace with God," Rom. v, 1; "dominion over sin," Rom. vi, 14; "victory over the world," 1 John v, 4; "the crucifixion of the flesh," Gal. v; "power to quench the fiery darts of the wicked," Eph. vi, 15; "joy unspeakable," 1 Pet. i, 8; "and the salvation of thy soul," 1 Pet. i, 9; Heb. x, 31.

Be not afraid of this conviction of unbelief; for it generally goes before divine faith, as the fermentation of a grain of corn in the earth is previous to its shooting its stalks toward heaven. "God concludes us shut up in unbelief," says St. Paul, "that he may have mercy upon us," Rom.

xi, 32. "When the Comforter is come," says our Lord, "he will convince the world of sin, because they believe not in me." This is the transgression which peculiarly deserves the name of *sin*, as being the *damning* sin according to the Gospel, Mark xvi, 16—the sin that binds upon us the guilt of all our other iniquities, and keeps up the power of all our corruptions. Its immediate effect is, to "harden the heart," Mark xvi, 14, and "make it depart from the living God," Heb. iii, 12; and this hardness and departure are the genuine parents of all our actual sins, the number and blackness of which increase and decrease, as the strength of unbelief grows or decays.

A conviction of this sin is of the utmost importance, as nothing but an affecting sense of its heinousness and power can make us entirely weary of ourselves; nothing but a sight of its destructive nature can prevent our resting without a complete cure.

But when thou art once convinced of unbelief, do not increase the difficulty of believing, by imagining true faith at an immense distance—consider it as very near thy heart. That which convinces thee of sin and unbelief, can in a moment, and with the greatest ease, convince thee of righteousness, and reveal in thee "Christ, the hope of glory." How quickly can the Spirit take of the things that belong to him, and show them to thee! "Say not then in thy heart, Who shall ascend into heaven, or descend into the deep," to get the seed of faith? But let St. Paul show

thee "the new and living way." "The word is nigh thee," says he, "even in thy mouth and in thy heart; that is, the word of faith which we preach; that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thy heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved; for we are saved by faith; faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. Hear then the word of the Lord."

Are thy sins really grievous to thee? Is the burden of them intolerable? Wouldst thou part with it at any rate? Dost thou fully renounce thy speculative and barren faith? Hast thou received the sentence of eternal death in thy conscience, acknowledging thy case—for any thing thou canst do without Christ—helpless, hopeless, desperate? And art thou truly brought to the grand inquiry, "What must I do to be saved?" See, feel, confess, that thou standest in absolute need of a divine Physician, an almighty Redeemer, and that the God-man, Jesus Christ, joins both these extraordinary characters in his wonderful person. Submit to be saved by grace, by free grace, through his infinite merits, and not thy wretched deserts, and, instead of opposing, continually study God's wonderful method of saving sinners, the worst of sinners, *by faith* in his blood.

There is no name but his under heaven whereby we must be saved, neither is there cure or salvation in any other, Acts iv, 12. As by him all things were created, so by him they subsist, and by him they must be restored. The power of

his word and breath made man a living soul! and now that we are dead to God, the same power, applying his blood and righteousness, must "create in us clean hearts, and renew right spirits within us." This, and this only, heals wounded consciences, washes polluted souls, and raises the dead in trespasses and sins.

Wouldst thou, then, be made whole? Determine, as St. Paul, "to know nothing but Christ and him crucified;" aim at believing, realizing applicatory views of what he is, and what he has done and suffered for thee. Through all the clouds of thy guilt and unbelief, which will vanish before our Sun of righteousness, as mists before the material sun, "behold him as the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world," and thine. See the immense dignity of his person: "he is God over all, blessed for ever," and yet he condescends to be "Immanuel, God with us," flesh of our flesh, and bone of our bone. Consider the inexpressible value and inconceivable efficacy of his precious, all-atoning blood. It is the blood of the sacred body, assumed by the eternal Logos, when he "appeared in the likeness of sinful flesh, both as a victim and a priest, to suffer the penalty of his own righteous law for us, and to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself," the blood of the Lamb of God, slain to sprinkle many nations, the blood of that mysterious being, who "fills the bosom of the Father," and the everlasting throne, at whose feet all the heavenly powers cast their crowns, and to whom, in the midst of the ac-

clamations and adorations of an innumerable company of angels, in the midst of sounding trumpets, thunderings, lightnings, and voices, the spirits of just men made perfect ascribe salvation—free, full, immensely dear-bought salvation—and, to say all in one word, it is the blood of God manifest in the flesh, Acts xx, 28; 1 Tim. iii, 16; for Jehovah, our righteousness, is the seed of the woman and the Son of man: the Godhead and the manhood are wonderfully joined in him; and in consequence of this mysterious union, he is not only a proper "mediator between God and man," but the sole medium of reconciliation and union between the offended Majesty of heaven and the rebellious sons of Adam. As the brazen serpent lifted up in the wilderness, when viewed by the wounded Israelites, was the only means by which the poison of the fiery serpents could be expelled, and health restored to their tortured, dying bodies, so Jesus lifted up on the cross, when beheld by the eye of faith as bleeding and dying in our stead, is the only way by which sin, the sting of death, can be extracted out of our guilty, perishing souls, the only antidote that can restore us to saving health and eternal life, John iii, 14. Apply whatever we will, beside this sovereign remedy, we may poison, but can never heal the envenomed and mortal wound.

But remember, sinner, that faith alone can make the blessed application. Adam fell by rejecting in unbelief the word of threatening; and thou canst never rise, but by receiving in faith

"the word of reconciliation," Gen. ii, 17; 2 Cor. v, 19. Instead, then, of confusing thy thoughts, and scattering thy desires by the pursuit of a variety of objects, remember that "one thing is needful" for thee—Christ and his salvation received by faith; for to as many as receive him, he gives power to become the sons of God, "even to them that believe on his name." Beseech him, therefore, to manifest himself to thee by his word and Spirit. "He is the author and finisher of faith," the giver of every good and perfect gift; ask of him a heart-felt confidence, that God so loved thee as to give his only-begotten Son, that thou shouldst not perish, but have everlasting life; a firm confidence that, as the first Adam willfully ruined thee, so he, the second Adam, freely loved thee, and gave himself for thee, and that thou hast redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, not according to thy merits, but the riches of his grace.

The least degree of this divinely-wrought confidence will begin to attract and unite thy soul to Him, who is our life and peace, our strength and righteousness. The everlasting Gospel will then be music in thine ears, and power in thine heart. Its cheerful, solemn sound, will raise thy drooping spirits, and make thee fix the eye of thy mind on the sign of the Son of man—the uplifted banner of the cross; and, O! while the self-righteous see nothing there but the despised, rejected man of sorrows, what wilt thou discover? "God in Christ reconciling the world to himself! God manifest in the flesh, to destroy the works

of the devil! Jehovah Jesus, the Captain of our salvation, treading the wine-press of the fierceness of the wrath of the Almighty! Of the people there was none with him; therefore his own arm brought salvation to him!"

While the Gospel trumpet is blown in Sion, and the self-hardened, scoffing infidel hears it with disdain and ridicule, what joy will the awful declarations convey to thy penitent and listening soul! With what rapturous delight wilt thou hang upon the lips of the messengers of peace, the sons of consolation, who preach free salvation by the blood of Jesus, while he himself, confirming the word of his servants, says to the melting heart, with his still, small, and yet powerful, renovating voice, "Behold, I sit upon my throne, making all things new—The words that I speak are spirit and life—I do not condemn thee, thy sins are forgiven—Be thou clean—Thy faith hath saved thee—Go in peace, and sin no more," Rev. xxi, 5; John vi, 63; Luke vii, 48, 50; Matt. viii, 3; John viii, 11.

And, O! what will thy believing, enlarged heart experience in that day of God's power, and thy spiritual birth! Christ, the true light of the world, the eternal life of men, coming suddenly to his temple, and filling it with the light of his countenance, and the power of his resurrection!—Christ shedding abroad in thy ravished soul the love of thy heavenly Father, thy bitterest enemies, and all mankind!—in a word, the Holy Ghost given to thee! or, Christ

dwelling in thy heart by faith! John i, 4; 1 John v, 12; Rom. viii, 15, and v, 5; Gal. i, 16; Eph. i, 13, and iii, 17.

Being thus made partaker of Christ, and of the Holy Ghost, Heb. iii, 14, and vi, 4, thy loving heart, thy praising lips, thy blameless life, will agree to testify that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, and that if any man is in Christ he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold all things are become new, Matt. ix, 6; 2 Cor. v, 17.

Till this is thy happy experience, pray—as the drawings of the Father and convictions of the Spirit will enable thee—earnestly pray for living faith, for a faith that may be to thee the substance of the pardon thou hopest for, and the evidence of the great sacrifice thou dost not see, but which our divine Surety really offered upon the cross for thee. Consider how deplorable a thing it is, that thou shouldst be prevented from claiming, receiving, enjoying the delightful knowledge of thy interest in the Redeemer's death; when his pardoning love, and the word of his grace, offer it thee without money, and without price; and absolutely nothing but infatuating unbelief, or spiritual sloth, keeps thee from the invaluable blessing. Be not satisfied idly to wait in the divine ordinances, till thou seest the kingdom of God come with power; but, as the violent do, take it by force.

Prisoner of hope, be strong, be bold,
Cast off thy doubts, disdain to fear;
Dare to believe, on Christ lay hold;

Wrestle with Christ in mighty prayer;
Tell him, I will not let thee go,
Till I thy name, thy nature know.

Be attentive to the calls of the Spirit, and follow the drawings of the Father till they bring thee to the Son; and keep thine eye upon the dawning light of the Gospel, till the morning star arise in thy heart. Venture, confidently venture, upon the boundless mercy of God in Jesus Christ. If a spirit of infirmity bows thee down, yield not to it; seventy times seven times try to arise and look up, calling aloud for help against it. Say, if possible, with tears, as the distressed father in the Gospel, "Lord, I believe," or, Lord, I would believe, "help thou my unbelief;" or, with tempted Job, "Though thou slay me, yet will I trust in thee."

In this manner knock, with the earnestness of the importunate widow, till the door of faith open, and thou begin to "see the salvation of God." But stop not here at the threshold of Christianity. "Have boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus. Go on from faith to faith, till thy day of pentecost is fully come, till thou art endued with power from on high, baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire, and sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise which Christ received of the Father, and abundantly shed on his servants and handmaids when he was glorified. Compare Matt. iii, 11; Eph. i, 13; John vii, 39; Acts i, 5, 8, and ii, 38, 39, and viii, 15, and xix, 2; John vii, 39; Titus iii, 6.

In the mean time, use all the means of grace

with an eye to their end: stir up the gift of hope that is in thee; and, to raise thy drooping expectations, receive the encouraging testimony of God's redeemed, praising people, whose hearts and tongues are ready to testify to thy ears, what the following lines declare to thine eyes.

V. "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son, Jesus Christ. For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life which was with the Father and is manifested unto us. Yes, we have found him of whom Moses and the prophets did write." From blessed experience we declare that the Messiah is come, that his essence is *love incarnate*, his name *Free Salvation*, and his delight the eternal happiness of the children of men. He is the chief among ten thousand prophets, priests, kings, and saviors: he is altogether lovely. We staked our souls upon his eternal truth, and it was done to us both according to his word and our faith; therefore, with humble joy we declare that he answers the prayers and delivers the souls of perishing sinners, as graciously as he did in the days of his flesh.

Upon trials, a thousand times successfully repeated, we proclaim him the help of the helpless, the hope of the hopeless, the health of the sick, the strength of the weak, the riches of the poor, the peace of the disquieted, the comfort of

the afflicted, the light of those that sit in darkness, the companion of the desolate, the friend of the friendless, the way to the bewildered, the wisdom of the foolish, the righteousness of the ungodly, the sanctification of the unholy, the redemption of captives, the joy of mourners, the glory of the infamous, and, in a word, the salvation of the lost.

Though he was the Creator of men and angels, he vouchsafed to be born of a woman, that we, the wretched offspring of degenerate Adam, might be born again—born of God. Though he had stretched forth the heavens like a curtain, and bespangled them with stars innumerable, he wrapped himself in the scanty, fading garment of our flesh, and put on the vail of our miserable humanity, that we might be invested with the glory and communicable perfections of the divine nature. Though he was the King of kings, and Lord of lords, he did not disdain to take upon him the form and office of a servant, that we might be delivered from the slavery of Satan, and that angels might be sent forth to minister for us, who are the heirs of salvation. Though he was the "fullness of him who fills all in all," he worked that we might not want, toiled that we might rest, and endured hunger and thirst, that we might taste the hidden manna, eat the bread of life, and drink with him the mystic wine of his Father's kingdom. His omnipotent word covers a thousand hills with verdure, and clothes millions of creatures with rich furs, glittering scales, and shining

plumage: but, O infinite condescension! he submitted to be stripped of his plain raiment, that our shame might not appear; he became naked, that we might be adorned with robes of righteousness and garments of salvation. Though his riches were immense and unsearchable like himself, though heaven was his throne, and earth his footstool, he became poor, and was destitute of a place where to lay his head, that we might be rich in faith here, and heirs of the kingdom hereafter. Though he was, is now, and ever shall be, the joy of the heavenly powers, and the object of their deepest adoration, he was voluntarily despised of men, that we might be honored of God; he was acquainted, too, with griefs, that we might rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. Though supreme Lawgiver and Judge of all, matchless love made him yield to be judged and unjustly condemned at Pilate's bar, that we might be honorably acquitted and gloriously rewarded before his awful tribunal. Though archangels laid their crowns at his feet, and seraphim vailed their faces before him, unable to stand the dazzling effulgence of his glory, he suffered himself to be derided, scoffed, spitted upon, scourged, and crowned with thorns, that we might be acknowledged, applauded, embraced, and presented with never-fading crowns of righteousness and glory. The Lord of hosts is his name; he is deservedly called Wonderful, Counselor, the Everlasting Father, the Mighty God, the Prince of Peace; cherubic legions fly at his nod; and yet, astonish-

ing humiliation! his shoulders, on which is laid the government of the world, felt the infamous load of a malefactor's cross; and barbarous soldiers, followed by an enraged mob, led him as a lamb to the slaughter, that we might be delivered from the heavy curse of the law, and gently conveyed by celestial powers into Abraham's bosom. "Let all the angels of God worship him," is the great decree, to which the heavenly hierarchy submits, with incessant transports of the most ardent devotion; and yet he was crucified as an execrable wretch, guilty of treason and blasphemy, that we, daring rebels and abominable sinners, might be made kings and priests to God, partaking of his highest glory, as he partook of our deepest shame; and, to crown his loving kindness, he expired in the midst of rending rocks and a supernatural darkness, that we might feel his tender mercies and be indulged with the light of heaven, when we go through the dark valley of the shadow of death, to reap the joys of eternal life.

Survey this wondrous cure,
And at each step let higher wonders rise!
Pardon for infinite offense; and pardon
Through means that speak its value infinite!
A pardon bought with blood! with blood Divine!
With blood Divine of him we made our foe!
Persisted to provoke! though woo'd and awed,
Bless'd and chastised, bold, flagrant rebels still!
Bold rebels midst the thunders of his throne!
Nor we alone! a rebel universe!
Yet for the foulest of the foul he dies.

But this is not all: having, "through the

grace of God, tasted death for every man," and perfumed the grave for believers,

He rose! he rose! he broke the bars of death.
O the burst gates! crush'd sting! demolish'd throne!
Last gasp of vanquish'd death! Shout, earth and heaven!
This *sum of good* to man; whose nature then
Took wing, and mounted with him from the tomb!
Then, then we rose! then first humanity,
Triumphant, pass'd the crystal gates of light.—YOUNG.

O the depth of the mystery of faith! O the breadth, the length, the hight of the love of Christ! All his stupendous humiliation, from his Father's bosom, through the virgin's womb, to the accursed tree; all his astonishing exaltation, from the dust of the grave to the sorrows of hell, to the joys of heaven and the highest throne of glory: all this immense progress of incarnate love—all, all is ours! His mysterious incarnation reunites and endears us to God; his natural birth procures our spiritual regeneration; his unspotted life restores us to a blissful immortality; his bitter agony gives us calm repose; his bloody sweat washes away our manifold pollutions; his deep wounds distill the balm that heals our envenomed sores; his perfect obedience is our first title to endless felicity; his full atonement purchases our free justification; his cruel death is the spring of immortal life; his grave the gate of heaven; his resurrection, the pledge of glory; his ascension, the triumph of our souls; his sitting at the right hand of the Majesty on high, the earnest of our future coronation and exalted felicity; and his prevailing

intercession the inexhaustible fountain of all our blessings.

Come, then, conscious sinner, come to the feast of pardoning love; taste with us that the Lord is gracious. Let not a false humility detain thee, under pretense that "thou art not yet humbled and broken enough for sin." Alas! who can humble thee, but Jesus, that says, "Without me ye can do nothing?" And how canst thou be broken, but by falling upon this chief cornerstone? If humiliation and contrition are parts of the salvation which he merited for thee, is it not the quintessence of self-righteousness to attempt to attain them without him? Away, then, forever away, with such a dangerous excuse.

Nor let the remembrance of thy sins keep thee from the speediest application to Jesus for grace and pardon. What! though thy crimes are of the deepest dye, and most enormous magnitude; though they are innumerable as the sands on the sea-shore, and aggravated by the most uncommon and horrid circumstances, yet thou needest not despair; he has opened a fountain for sin of every kind, and uncleanness of every degree; "his blood cleanses from ALL sin."

He is a Redeemer most eminently fitted, a Savior most completely qualified to restore corrupt, guilty, apostate, undone mankind; the vilest of the vile, the foulest of the foul, not excepted. He is *almighty*, and therefore perfectly able to restore lapsed powers, root up inveterate habits, and implant heavenly tempers. He is *love* itself: compassionate, merciful, pardoning

love became incarnate for thee. And shall he, that spared not his own life, but delivered himself up for us all, shall he not with his own blood also freely give us all things?

Behold, O behold him with the eye of thy faith; cruelly torn with various instruments of torture, he hangs aloft on the accursed tree, between two of the most execrable malefactors; and there, insulted more than they, he bears our infamous load of guilt. He knows no sin, and yet he is made sin for us; he becomes a curse, to redeem us from the curse of the law; himself bears our sins in his own body on the tree; "he is wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace is upon him. God hath laid on him the iniquity of us all, and with his stripes we are healed."

See, PARDON FOR LOST SINNERS is written with pointed steel and streaming blood, on his pierced hands and feet! The double flood issuing from his wounded side more than seals the dear-bought blessing; the handwriting against us is nailed to his cross, and blotted out with his precious blood; his open arms invite, draw, and welcome returning prodigals; and there encircled, the worst of sinners may find a safe and delightful retreat, a real and present heaven.

O sinner! let thy heart fly thither on the wings of eager expectation and impetuous desire. By all that is near, dear, and sacred to thee, fly—fly from eternal death—fly for eternal life

The *law*, violated by ten thousand transgressions, pursues thee with ten thousand curses; the sword of divine vengeance flames over thy devoted head; sin, the sting of death, has been a thousand times shot into thy wretched breast; its subtile and dire poison continually works in thy hardened or distressed heart; *guilt*, the sting of sin, the never-dying worm, perpetually benumbs thy stupid soul, or gnaws thy restless conscience; raging lusts, those sparks of the fire of hell, which nothing but the blood of the cross can quench; our fierce passions, those flashes of infernal lightning, that portend an impending storm, frequently break out in thy benighted soul, a heart-felt pledge of tormenting flames; Satan, whom thou hast, perhaps, invoked by horrid imprecations, goes about as a roaring lion, seeking to insnare his careless votary, or to devour his desperate worshiper; death levels his pointed spear at thy thoughtless or throbbing heart; hell itself is moved from beneath, to meet thee at thy coming; and the grave gapes at thy feet, ready to close her hideous mouth upon her accursed prey.

Fly, then, miserable sinner, if thy flesh is not brass, and thou canst not dwell with everlasting burnings, fly for shelter to the bloody cross of Jesus. There thou wilt meet him who was, and is, and is to come; Immanuel, God with us, who appeared as the Son of man, to make his soul an offering for sin, for thy sin; and saved thy life from destruction, by losing his own in pangs

which made the sun turn pale, shook the earth, and caused the shattered graves to give up their dead!

He is even now near to thy heart; he stands at the door, and gently knocks by the word of his grace. If thou hearest his voice, and openest by believing, he will come in, the word of reconciliation shall be powerfully ingrafted into thy heart, and thou shalt know, experimentally know, the truth, and the truth shall make thee free. Assured that he hath by himself purged thy sins, abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel, thou shalt sup with him and he with thee; thou shalt eat the bread of God, which came down from heaven to give life to a perishing world. Evangelical truth, received by faith, will heal, nourish, comfort, and sanctify thy soul.

But perhaps thy guilty heart receives no consolation from these lines. Thou still considerest Christ only as a severe lawgiver, or as an inflexible judge, and not as the propitiation for thy sins, and thy gracious, all-prevailing Advocate with the Father. O! how dost thou wrong both him and thyself by such false conceptions! And how soon would thy gloomy fears give place to triumphant joy, if thy thoughts of him corresponded with his gracious designs concerning thee!

Wouldst thou know him better, behold him through the glass of his word, and not through the mist of thy fears; and thou wilt see that, far from watching over thee for evil, he fixes upon

thee the piercing eye of his redeeming love, waits that he may be gracious to thy soul, and calls, continually calls for thee! O! if thou hast an ear, listen; and as thou listenest, wonder at the kind, reviving words which proceed out of his mouth.

VI. * "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, says the Lord; speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, and her iniquity is pardoned; for in me she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins: he is well pleased for my righteousness' sake; I have magnified the law, and made it honorable: I have been lifted up, and now I draw all men unto me. My delights are with the sons of men, and therefore am I exalted, that I may have mercy upon them. Behold, I come with a strong hand, my reward is with me, and my work before me. Every valley shall be exalted, every mountain and hill shall be made low; the crooked shall be made straight, and

* This part of the Address is almost literally transcribed from the Scripture: and it is designed for none but mourners in Sion, dejected sinners, who are backward to come to Christ, that they may have life. These want *line upon line*, and invitation upon invitation; and it is well if, after all, they are encouraged to come. As for full souls, I know they will loathe this honeycomb. But while they complain, "it has too many cells, and they are filled with the same thing," some poor hungry hearts will say, *One thing is needful* for us. We can not have too much virgin honey; its sweetness makes amends for the want of variety. If the manna falls abundantly round our tents, it will stir us up to praise, and not to murmur. Fullness of the bread of life will not make us wax fat and kick, like Jeshurun, but bless God for his rich profusion; with the disciples, we shall even *gather up the fragments, that nothing be lost.*

the rough places plain; my glory shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together.

"Hearken unto me, ye stout-hearted, that are far from righteousness; I bring near my righteousness, it shall not be far off, and my salvation shall not tarry. Seek ye me while I may be found—call upon me while I am near; return unto me, and I will have mercy upon you; and though ye have only done evil before me from your youth, I will abundantly pardon: for my thoughts are not revengeful as your thoughts, nor my ways unloving as your ways; in me ye shall be saved with an everlasting salvation."

"Come, therefore, unto me, all ye that travail and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest: my yoke is easy, my burden light, and my rest glorious. Ho! every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters; and he that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat, all that can revive, strengthen, and delight your souls; yea, come, buy wine and milk, without money and without price. Wherefore do ye spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which satisfieth not? Hearken diligently unto me, eat that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness. Incline your ear, and come unto me; hear, and your soul shall live: I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David; and you shall all know me, from the least to the greatest; for I will forgive your iniquity, and remember your sin no more.

"O! if thou knewest the gifts of God,

wretched sinner, and who it is that saith unto thee, *If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink*, thou wouldst have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water; a well, a fountain of it would have sprung up in thee unto everlasting life; yea, out of thy belly, thy inmost soul, rivers of living water, the greatest abundance of the purest joy, would have flowed forever. I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions, for my own sake, and will not remember thy sins: I will guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drouth; and thou shalt be like a watered garden, or like a spring of water whose waters do not fail.

"O how often would I have gathered thee in years past, as a hen gathers her brood under her wings! How often would I have led thee, as an eagle fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them and beareth them, but thou wouldst not. Nevertheless, this is still the day of my power, mercy, and love: I pardon those whom I reserve, and I will yet be pacified toward thee, for all that thou hast done; I was angry with thee, but my anger was turned away, my thoughts toward thee are thoughts of peace, and I am become thy salvation. Come, then, let us now reason together, and though thy sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."

Why does not thy drooping heart, O sinner, leap for joy, or melt with gratitude, at these tender invitations of thy Savior? Thinkest thou

they do not belong to thee? Dost thou suppose Jesus, who is all purity and holiness, must turn away with abhorrence from such a guilty, polluted, and abominable creature as thou art? One so void of all good, so full of evil, so completely lost and undone as thou seest thyself? Art thou afraid that thy relapses into sin have been so frequent, and thy backslidings so multiplied, that hope, which comes to all, can no more come to thee? Or does the enemy of thy soul suggest thou art careless, hardened, and sunk in stupid unbelief? Does he insinuate, thou hast so long trifled with divine grace, art gone such lengths in horrid wickedness, or hast contracted such unconquerable habits of indulging thy carnal mind, or following thy vain imaginations, that infinite mercy can no longer pardon thy sins, or infinite power change thy nature? Art thou even tempted to believe thou hast committed the sin against the Holy Ghost, and art almost, if not altogether, given up to a reprobate mind? O check those gloomy, despairing thoughts; resist the devil, and give place to more true and honorable sentiments of Jesus!

Wherefore dost thou doubt, O thou of little faith? Is any thing too hard for the Lord? Are not all things possible with God? Can the Almighty, who became incarnate to die as man in thy place, want either ability or willingness to help thee, be thy case ever so deplorable and desperate? Is not darkness or light, sickness or death, all one to him, who is the light of the

world, and the Prince of life; and who, with a word or a touch, raised the dead, whether they were yet warm on a bed, or cold in a coffin, or already putrefied in a grave?

Confine not, then, poor, dejected sinner, thy Savior's boundless mercy within the narrow limits of thy unbelieving thoughts. Get Scriptural views of his pardoning love, and true discoveries of his redeeming power. To guess aright at the prodigious extent of his mercy, lift up the dim eyes of thy struggling faith, and behold a great multitude, which no man can number, standing before the throne, with their robes washed, and made white in the blood of the Lamb.

Among those countless monuments of divine mercy, those illustrious trophies of free grace, see David, who, after having been admitted to close communion with God, plunged for ten months in the horrible guilt of adultery, treachery, hypocrisy, and murder! See Paul, once so fierce an enemy to the truth, so fiery a blasphemer of Jesus, so raging a persecutor of the saints, that his very breath was threatenings and slaughter against them! See Peter, who, after a great profession of faithfulness, and upon an apparently-slight temptation, denied three times his Master, his Savior, and his God, in his very presence; Peter, guilty of lying, cursing, and perjury, immediately after he had been apprised of the imminent temptation, and armed against it, both by receiving the holy sacrament at our Lord's own hand, and being admitted to see his wonderful agony, and glorious miracles. These,

and thousands more, agree to tell thee, "For this cause we obtain mercy, that in us Jesus Christ might show forth all long-suffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting."

If all these witnesses do not silence thy doubts, and encourage thy hopes, Jesus himself, the faithful and true witness, will yet plead the cause of his dying love, against thy unbelieving fears: thy gracious Advocate with God will yet be God's condescending Advocate with thee. O, let thy clamorous conscience keep silence, while he preaches to thee the everlasting Gospel of his grace! And if to-day thou hearest his voice, harden not thy heart; come out of the cave of unbelief, wrap thyself in the mantle of divine mercy, and worship the pardoning God, the God of never-failing truth and everlasting love.

Gracious Savior! make thine own words spirit and life to the soul thou hast formed by thy breath, and purchased with thy blood. Blessed Comforter! while thy precious sayings strike the eyes of this hopeless reader, let the love which thou sheddest abroad soften, melt, and revive his poor, oppressed heart, and let salvation come this day to the house of a son or daughter of Abraham! A touch, a breath from thee, will break the bars of iron, burst the gates of brass, and make the everlasting doors lift up their heads, that the King of glory may come in.

"Who is the King of glory? Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments

from Bozrah? This that is glorious in his apparel, traveling in the greatness of his strength?

"I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save. I have trodden the wine-press alone, mine own arm hath brought salvation unto me, salvation to the lost: it is gone forth; my righteousness is near; the isles shall wait on me, and on my arm shall they trust. The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me: he hath anointed me to preach good tidings to the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound, to comfort all that mourn, and by the blood of the covenant to send forth the prisoners out of the pit where is no water.

"Fear not, therefore, thou worm Jacob; I am the first and the last, he that liveth and was dead, and behold, I am alive for evermore. Yes, I ever live to make intercession for thee; and because I live, thou shalt live also. All power is given, all judgment is committed to me in heaven and earth: I have the keys of death and hell: a Jonah, who cries to me out of the very belly of hell, is not out of the reach of my gracious and omnipotent arm.

"Who art thou that hast feared continually every day, because of the fury of the oppressor, as if he were ready to destroy? I, even I, am he that comforteth thee. I bring glad tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. I have triumphed over all thine enemies on the cross. I have led captivity captive, and received gifts for men, even the promise of the Father,

that the Lord God the Spirit may dwell in them. At my command the great, the evangelical trumpet is blown, and they that are ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, do come, and are welcome to Mount Sion. Hasten with them, thou captive exile, hasten to me, that thou mayest be loosed, and that thou shouldst not die in the horrible pit of thy natural state.

"Thy helplessness is no hinderance to my loving kindness: I break not the bruised reed, I quench not the smoking flax: I uphold all that fall, I raise up all those that are bowed down: I say to the prisoners, Go forth; and to them that are in darkness, Show yourselves: I strengthen the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees: I say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not; behold, I will come with vengeance and a recompense; I will come and save you.

"My tender mercies are over all my works. When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them; I the God of Israel will not forsake them: I will open rivers in high places; I will make the wilderness a pool, and the dry land springs of water.

"It is true thou hast sinned with a high hand, both against thy light, and against my love; but how shall I give thee up, Ephraim? How shall I deliver thee, sinner? How shall I make thee as Admah, and set thee as Zeboim, those rebellious cities on which I poured my flaming ven-

geance? My heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together: I will not destroy thee; for I am God, and not man: I have seen thy ways, and will heal and lead thee, and restore comfort to thee, for I create the fruit of the lips. Peace! peace to him that is afar off, and to him that is near; I will heal him.

"Thou hast not chosen me, but I have chosen thee; thou art my servant; fear not, for I am with thee: be not dismayed, for I am thy God. My strength is sufficient for thee; I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness. They that war against thee shall be as nothing; for I, the Lord thy God, will hold thy right hand, and make my strength perfect in thy weakness. I will bring thee by a way thou hast not known. I will make darkness light before thee, and crooked paths straight: when thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee, and when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee; for I am the Lord thy Savior, and thy God. I have carried thee from the womb, and even to hoary hairs will I bear and deliver thee.

"Therefore, hear now this, thou afflicted and drunken, but not with wine; I will not contend forever, neither will I be always wroth, for the spirit should fail before me, and the soul which I have made. I turn the water of affliction into the wine of consolation. Behold, I take out of thy hand the cup of trembling, even the dregs of the cup of my fury; thou shalt no

more drink it again; I will put it into the hand of them that afflict thy soul: and, in the room of it, I give thee the cup of the New Testament in my blood shed for the remission of sins: it is now ready; draw near, drink thou of it, and taste that I am gracious.

"Come near, that I may speak a word in season to thy weary spirit. Why standest thou afar off? Come near, I say, that my soul may bless thee. Let me show thee my glory, and proclaim my soul-reviving name—the Lord! the Lord God! merciful and gracious, long suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, and forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin. Let me wash thy heart from iniquity, guilty sinner; for unless I wash thee, thou hast no part with me. Unless thou art born again of water and of the Spirit, thou canst not see the kingdom of God. But this is the covenant of promise which I make with thee: I will sprinkle clean water upon thee and thou shalt be clean; a new heart will I give thee, and a new spirit, even my own Spirit, will I put within thee, and thou shalt be completely born of God; and at that day thou shalt know that I am in the Father, and thou in me, and I in thee.

"Who is he that condemneth? It is I who died for thy sins; yea, rather, who rose again for thy justification, who am even at the right hand of God, who also make intercession for thee. The same compassionate love that made me weep over ungrateful Jerusalem, and groan over dead Lazarus, made me bleed and die for

thee. O that in this thy day, thou mayest know the things that belong unto thy peace, and the efficacy of that sacrifice, by which I have forever perfected them that are sanctified! O that unbelief, so injurious to me, and so pernicious to thee, may no longer hide my love from thine eyes!

"What! afraid of my purity, art thou ready to cry out as my apostle, Depart from me, O Lord, for I am a sinful man? And dost thou tremble at my words, as a criminal at the sentence of his judge? O, be of good cheer; it is I, be not afraid. Am not I thy light and strength, thy shield and buckler, thy tower and resting-place, thy stronghold whereunto thou mayest always resort, thy castle and fortress, the horn also of thy salvation and thy refuge? As for thy sins, if thou desirest to part with them, they will no more hinder me from visiting thee, than the sickness of a patient prevents a physician from giving him his attendance.

"I know thou art a sinner, a great sinner: for this cause came I down from heaven to Bethlehem, to Gethsemane, to Calvary. I know thine iniquities are more in number than the hairs of thy head; like a sore burden, they are too heavy for thee to bear: and, therefore, have I borne them for thee, in my own body on the tree. I came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance; I am the man that receiveth sinners, and eateth with them; I am the friend of returning publicans and harlots; all manner of sins and blasphemies shall be forgiven them through faith in my blood; God was in me rec-

onciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and now, I beseech thee, be *thou* [for one] reconciled to God; for in me God is reconciled to *thee;* thy sin is covered, and thine iniquity forgiven.

"Great as thy crimes are, poor mourner in Zion, I upbraid thee not with them: my infinitely-meritorious sacrifice hath long ago atoned for their heinousness, and now I cast the mantle of my pardoning love over their multitude: thou art ashamed of them, and shall I be ashamed of thee? Far be the thought from thee. I glory in extending my boundless mercy to such miserable objects as thou art. This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all men to be received, that I came into the world to save sinners; and if, with my servant Paul, thou seest thyself the *chief* of them, let me do the chief part of the errand on which I came; look unto me, and partake with him of my *richest* salvation; lose thy cares in the bosom of my mercy, and receive the atonement I made for thee; but receive it *now:* for I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succored thee: behold, *now* is the accepted time: behold, *now* is the day of salvation; the day in which I bind up the breach of my people, and heal the stroke of their wound.

"Whence arise, O poor sinner, thy backwardness and misgivings? I have ransomed thee from the power of the grave, and thou art mine: I come to heal thee, and reveal to thee the abundance of peace and truth: I bring thee a

cure for thy wounded conscience, and saving health for thy sin-distempered soul!

"In a little wrath, and for a small moment, I have hid my face from thee; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, for I am the Lord thy Redeemer. Believe it, and faith will work by love, and love will cast out fear: thus shalt thou take hold of my strength, that thou mayest make peace with me; and thou shalt make peace with me: for I am strength to the needy in his distress, a hiding-place from the wind, a covert from the tempest, as rivers of water in a dry place, and as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.

"Come, then, be not of them that draw back from me to perdition, but of them who believe to the saving of the soul. Far from casting away thy little confidence, which hath great recompense of reward, hold it fast; resist even unto blood, striving against the damning sin of unbelief; trust in me forever, for in me, Jehovah thy righteousness, is everlasting strength; and let me no longer complain, that thou—one of my oppressed people in spiritual Egypt—wilt have none of me, and wilt not even come to me, that thou mightest have life more abundantly.

"Not by works of righteousness which thou hast done, but according to my mercy, I saved thee. I am the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. What my gracious purpose planned before time, I have executed in time. My life and death have completed the wonderful bridge, by which thou canst go over the great

deep, fixed between a holy God and thy sinful soul. Concerning a main arch of this mighty work, with one of my last breaths I said, *It is finished;* and I now confirm the glad tidings with regard to the whole. With my right hand, and with my holy arm, I have gotten myself the victory, and parted for thee, not the waves of the Red Sea, but the dreadful billows of the fiery gulf. And now I return to see thee safe over. Leave only the world and sin behind; and, walking by faith, follow me through the regeneration to a throne of glory.

"Whence arises, sinner, this backwardness to trust in my promise, and venture after me? Dost thou suspect the sincerity of my tenders of grace? And by thinking that I secretly except thee from my mercy, when I offer it thee openly, dost thou still make me a dissembler, a liar? O, wrong me not so far. I am the Truth itself; I abhor dissimulation in my creatures: and I, that say a man should not use deceit, shall I use deceit? Shall I have concord with Belial? Shall there be an agreement between the faithful witness and the father of lies? Shall I sentence him that loveth a lie to the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone, and be guilty of making one myself? Horrible to suppose! Reject the blasphemous thought, sinner; it wounds me in the tenderest part.

"No, no, I do not put on a mask of pretended love, to hide a rancorous, unforgiving temper; the general invitation that formerly passed my lips, is still the very language of my heart:

Whosoever will, let him come and take of the water of life freely; and the promise which I formerly made, is still firmer than the pillars of heaven: Him that cometh unto me I will in no-wise cast out. Let these words, like incorruptible seed, beget thee again to a lively hope, and help thee to stir thyself up to lay hold on me and my great salvation.

"I grant that no man cometh unto me, except the Father draw him: but does he not say, I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving kindness, with the cords of a man, with the bands of love, have I drawn thee? Does he not draw thee even now? Who stirs thee up to repentance? Who raises in thee a desire of coming unto me by prayer? Who indulges thee at times with sweet hopes and alluring joys, to encourage thee to come? Is it not my Father and thine, thou poor, starving prodigal? And that nothing may be wanting on his part to make thee come, to drawing does he not add driving? Does he not obstruct all thy prospects of creature happiness, and blast all thy worldly, yea, and all thy self-righteous schemes? And while he touches thy heart with the rod of distress, does he not lay the scourge of affliction on thy back, and put this gracious invitation in thy hand? Away, then, with thy hard thoughts of my Father: he and I are a flame of eternal love: I and the Father are one.

"Neither say thou in thy heart, This is a day of trouble, rebuke, and blasphemy; the children are come to their birth, and there is not strength

to bring forth. Shall I bring to the birth, and not give strength according to the day? Dost thou fear that my zeal, my strength, and the sounding of my bowels toward thee, are restrained? Am not I Jesus still? Is my love waxed cold that it can not pity? Is my hand shortened at all that it can not save? Is mine ear heavy that it can not hear? Or have I no power to deliver? Behold, at my rebuke I dry up the sea, I clothe the heavens with blackness; and if in the greatest storm I say to the raging billows, *Be still!* there is a great calm; fear not, then, the zeal of the Lord of hosts—my zeal will do this, and more for thy soul; yea, I will do for thee exceeding abundantly above that thou canst ask or think.

"I see what passes in thy heart, O thou unwise, and slow of heart to believe all that I and my prophets have spoken: I read thy new excuses. Thou sayest thou dost not suspect me, my faithfulness and my power; but thyself, thy helplessness, and the treachery of thy own desperately-wicked heart. What, shall this sore evil hinder thee from coming to me, who alone can remedy it? Wilt thou pray to be excused from believing on such an account as this? O drop this last, this most absurd plea, and walk in the steps of the faith of thy father Abraham, Rom. iv, 16. Consider not the deadness and hardness of thy heart, but the reviving, softening love of mine; not thy want of power, but my omnipotence; not the suggestions of Satan, but the declarations of my Gospel. Wrestle

not only against flesh and blood, but against the powers of eternal darkness, and the spiritual wickedness of an unbelieving thought. Strive to enter in at the strait gate of faith. Against hope believe in hope, that I quicken the dead, and call the things which are not as though they were. Stagger no more at my promises through unbelief, but be strong in faith, and give glory to God, by being fully persuaded, that what I promise, I am able and willing to perform.

"In me thou mayest find the richest and readiest supply of all thy wants: I am both the Resurrection of the dead, and the Life of the living: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and he that believeth in me shall never die. Believe, then, and thou shalt not come into condemnation. Believe, and thou shalt receive power, thou shalt see the glory of God, thou shalt be established, yea, and sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise. Believe, and thou hast everlasting life, and shalt not come into condemnation. Believe, and a grain of faith will remove mountains of guilt and unbelief. Believe with all thy heart; all things are possible to him that believeth, and he shall inherit all promises: for to him that overcometh—and faith is the victory—will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and to sit with me on my throne: as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father on his throne. Only believe, then, and through faith thou shalt subdue the kingdom of darkness, work righteousness, obtain promises, stop the mouth of the roaring lion,

quench the violence of temptation's fire, escape the flaming point of Satan's darts, out of weakness be made strong, wax valiant in fight, turn to flight the armies of thy spiritual adversaries, and receive thy dead soul raised to life again.

"Thou hast played with the fiery serpents; they have bitten thy heart; but I have already sucked the worst of the mortal poison. In the perilous attempt my soul was seized with sorrow even to death, and an unheard-of agony, attended with a bloody sweat, came upon my body. A racking cross was the bed I was stretched upon; sharp thorns proved the pillow on which I rested my fainting head. The bitterest sarcasms were my consolations; vinegar and gall my cordials; a band of bloody soldiers the cruel wretches appointed to tear open my veins; whips, nails, hammers, and a spear, the instruments allowed them to do the dreadful operation. For hours I bled under their merciless hands; and thy fearful curse, O sinner, flowed together with my blood. In the mean time, noon-day light was turned into the gloom of night, a dire emblem of the darkness that overspread my agonizing soul; and at last, while earthquakes rocked me into the sleep of death, I gave up the ghost with cries that astonished my bitterest enemies, and made them smite their breasts in pangs of involuntary sympathy. Thus, to make thee partaker of my saving health, I took the shameful and painful consequences of thy mortal distemper upon me. And now, sinner, despise no more such amazing love; requite it with a believing

look. Consider my wounds, till thy conscience feels their wonderful effect. Behold my atoning blood, till thou canst witness it heals all thy infirmities.

"Knowing the terrors of the Lord, I persuade men. Come, thou poor prisoner of hope, turn by faith to the stronghold of my protection. Up! for God will destroy this Sodom, the wicked world where thou lingerest. Up! for the great and terrible day of the Lord approaches. As I live, there is but one step between thee and death, and another between death and hell.

"Let my love even constrain thee to arise, and to follow me; that I may receive thee to myself, and complain no longer, that with respect to thee, I have labored in vain, and spent my strength for naught. Surely, sinner, I deserve thy grateful love, for I have fought thy fiercest enemies. Dreadful was the battle! my flesh was torn, my blood spilt, my life lost in the obstinate combat: but I have slain the lion and the bear, I have vanquished death and the grave, and rescued thy poor, helpless soul; and now, let thy good Shepherd rejoice over his lost sheep: let gratitude compel thee to come into the fold of my Church, and join the little flock of my faithful followers. And if thou canst not come, do but look wishfully at me, and I will lay thee on my shoulders, rejoicing, and carry thee in triumph into the richest pastures of my grace.

"Once more I turn supplicant: once more I stand at the door and knock: Saul! Saul! it is

hard for thee to kick against the sharp goads of my love. Martha! Martha! one thing is needful: choose the good part, choose me. O Absalom, my son! my son! give me thy heart; I have died for thee; do not crucify me afresh. Lay down the spear of unbelief, and thine is my grace, my glory, my kingdom—the kingdom of heaven.

"Be not afraid to surrender: rebellious as thou art, I love thee still. Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, she may forget, yet will I not forget thee. If thou wilt not take my word, believe my oath; because I can swear by no greater, I swear by myself: 'As I live, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn, then, turn to me, for I have redeemed thee: I have cast all thy sins into the depth of the sea, and will subdue all thine iniquities.'

"And if thou canst not believe my oath, credit these scars. See! I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands. Long, too long have I waited for thy return, thou poor, wandering, weary prodigal. Let me see in thee the travail of thy soul, and be satisfied. By the mystery of my holy incarnation and dreadful temptation, by my agony and bloody sweat, by my infamous death and glorious resurrection, I beseech thee, come to the pardoning God by me. If thou hast nothing to pay, I forgive thee all the debt: whether it be fifty or five hundred pence, or ten thousand talents, I frankly forgive

thee all. Only let me heal thy backslidings, and love thee freely; let my left hand be under thy head, and let my right hand embrace thee. See the wounds which I have received for thee, in the house of my friends! Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side, and be not faithless, but believing. Cleave to me with full purpose of heart; follow me through the regeneration, and thou shalt not only be one of my jewels, but a crown of glory, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God: yea, as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so will I rejoice over thee, and give thee a name better than that of son and daughter: I, the Holy One of Israel, will be thy life and glory; I, thy Maker, will be thy husband, and thy all."

And are these, O sinner, the gracious sayings of God to thee? The compassionate expostulations of God, become incarnate for thee? Did God so love thee as to set forth his only-begotten Son, as a propitiation through faith in his blood, thus to declare his righteousness, for the remission of sins that are past? May the Almighty now be just, and yet the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus? Is there no difference, no respect of persons with him? And is the same Lord over all, rich to all that call upon him? Then shout, ye heavens! triumph, thou earth! and thou, happy sinner, know the day of thy visitation, be wise, ponder these things, and thou shalt understand the loving kindness of the Lord.

Be no longer afraid that it will be presumption in thee to believe, and that God will be offended with thee if thou makest so free with Jesus, as to wash instantly in the fountain of his atoning blood. He not only gives thee *leave* to believe, but he *invites* thee to do it freely. Nay, he *commands* thee to believe, for "this is his *commandment*, that we should believe on the name of his Son, Jesus Christ." He even enforces the precept by a double *promise*, that if thou believest, "thou shalt not perish, but have everlasting life." And that nothing may be wanting to stir thee up to this important business, he is gracious enough to threaten the neglect of it with the most dreadful *punishment;* for, "he that believeth not, shall not enter into his rest, and shall be damned;" and he that to the end remains "fearful and unbelieving, shall be cast into the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death." How canst thou doubt, then, whether thou art welcome to receive "the Son given," by believing on his name?

Come to him just as thou art, and he will make thee what thou shouldst be. When he counsels thee to buy of him the gold of faith, and the garment of salvation, take him at his Gospel word: come, without regarding thy stuff: the poorer thou art the better: the oil of his grace flows most abundantly into empty vessels: his charity is most glorified in the relief of the most miserable objects: his royal bounty scorns the vile compensation of thy wretched merits: he sells, like a king—like the King of kings—

without money and without price. *Ask and have* and *take freely*, are the encouraging mottoes written upon all the unsearchable treasures of his grace.

Be of good comfort, then; rise, he calleth thee; stretch out they withered hand, and he will restore it: open thy mouth wide, and he will fill it: bring an empty vessel, a poor hungry heart, and he will give into thy bosom good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over.

And now, what meanest thou, O sleeper? Why tarriest thou? Arise, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord. Lose not time in conferring with flesh and blood, much less in parleying with Satan, or consulting thy unbelieving heart: here delays lead to ruin: the Philistines are upon thee, instantly shake thyself. If thou art not altogether blinded by the god of this world, and led captive by him at his will, this moment, in the powerful name of Jesus, burst the bonds of spiritual sloth—break, like a desperate soul, out of the prison of unbelief—escape for thy life—look not behind thee—stay not in all the plain. This one thing do: leaving the things that are behind, Sodom and her ways, press forward toward Zoar, and escape to the mount of God, lest thou be consumed. By the new and living way consecrated for us, in full assurance of faith, fly to the Father of mercies, pass through the crowd of Laodicean professors, press through the opening door of hope, and take the kingdom of heaven by violence.

With halting, yet wrestling Jacob, say to the Friend of sinners, "I will not let thee go, unless thou bless me." If he make as if he would go farther, with the two mournful disciples constrain him to stay; or rather, with the distressed woman of Canaan, follow him whithersoever he goeth, take no denial; through the vail, that is to say, his flesh, torn from the crown of his head to the sole of his feet—through this mysterious vail, rent from the top to the bottom, rush into the blood-besprinkled sanctuary; embrace the horns of the golden altar; lay all thy guilt on the head of the sin-atoning victim; read thy name on the breast of thy merciful High Priest; claim the safety, demand the blessings, receive the consolations bestowed on all that flee to him for refuge, and begin a new, delightful life, under the healing and peaceful shadow of his wings.

But, perhaps, thou art now devoid of active power, and broken in spirit. The hurry of thy self-righteous nature subsides. Wounded and half dead, thou liest in the way of misery, waiting for the passing by of thy heavenly Deliverer. Thou hadst set thy heart upon being blest in one particular manner, and God, in his wisdom, thinks it best to bless thee in another. Thou wouldst scale the New Jerusalem, and storm heaven; but he chooses it should come down into thy soul, as a fruitful shower descends into a fleece of wool. Be still, then, and know that he is God. Let him break thy self-will, which hides itself under godly appearances; and let

him practically teach thee, that salvation is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God who showeth mercy.

Meekly dive into the amazing depth of these words, "In quietness and rest shall be your strength: stand still and see the salvation of God." The fire, the earthquake, and the rending of rocks, are over; silence takes place; the still, small voice will soon follow. Thou art for a time taken from the foaming billows of self-agitation, and led by the still waters; a calm succeeds the impetuous storm, and a passive waiting thy restless, fruitless endeavors. Thou art in the case of one fallen into the sea, who, having struggled long and hard to escape drowning, is obliged to yield at last. Yield, then, weary sinner, yield to thy happy fate. Fully surrrender to the God of thy life. Entirely abandon thyself to Jesus. Freely trust him with thy present and eternal salvation. Whether thou swim or sink, let thyself go into the ocean of mercy. Catch at no broken reed by the way, but calmly venture into the unfathomable depths of redeeming love. Lose thus thy life, and thou shalt find it. The power of God will soon be made perfect in thy weakness; and when thy strength is renewed, earnestly wrestle again. Thus go on, alternately striving and waiting, according to the leadings of the Holy Spirit, till, having passed through all the inferior dispensations of Divine grace, thou enter by faith into the rest that remains for the people of God, and take possession of that kingdom of God, which

consists in righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

VII. In that kingdom, happy believer, the times of refreshing fully come from the presence of the Lord: mercy and love embrace thee on every side, and thy sprinkled conscience enjoys the peace of a sin-pardoning God; then smiling Justice, more than satisfied by the meritorious death of Christ, sheathes her flaming sword, and declares, "There is now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus;" they are justified from all things and freely forgiven all trespasses. And now thou art more than conqueror through him that loved thee. Standing by humble faith in his omnipotence, thou canst do all things through his grace strengthening thee. Sin has no dominion over thee; the cruel and bloody tyrant, that reigned unto death, is dethroned; and grace, rich grace, sweetly reigns through righteousness unto eternal life. Triumphing in Christ over thy fiercest enemies, and putting thy victorious foot upon the neck of the *last*, thou challengest his utmost rage, and shoutest, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!"

Now thou seest and feelest that God is *love*—thou dwellest in him, and he in thee. *Love*, the fulfilling of the law, diffusing itself through all the heart, influences thy looks, words, and actions, and makes thee spring after Jesus into the chariot of cheerful obedience; thy heart is as his heart; and while active grace draws thy

willing soul along, God's free Spirit pours the oil of gladness upon the fervid wheels of thy affections: supported and animated by thy Lord's presence, thou swiftly movest, thou delightfully fliest in all the ways of duty; mountains of difficulties sink into the plains before thee; wisdom's roughest ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.

Now thou rejoicest to be thought worthy to suffer shame for Christ's name, and countest it all joy when thou fallest into divers trials. With him the cross losest its dreadful aspect and enormous weight: when thou findest it in the highway of holiness, instead of consulting with flesh and blood, how thou shalt go aside to avoid it, thou immediately takest it up, and it proves a comforting staff, a never-failing prop.

Christ crucified works this miracle of grace, for him thou receivest with every cross; and the moment thou dost so in the power of his Spirit, God, even thy own God, gives thee his choicest blessing: he crowns thee with loving-kindness and tender mercies; and, with the inexpressible complaisance of a father who receives a lost son, with the triumphant joy of a Savior who embraces a raised Lazarus, he says to the myriads that surround his throne, "One more sinner repenteth unto life; halleluiah! He hath escaped the avenger of blood—he hath passed the gate of the city of refuge; halleluiah! shout, ye sons of the morning! My angels, strike your golden harps! Dance, every heart, for joy, through the realms of heaven! Let bursts of

triumphant mirth, let peals of ravishing praise, roll along the transporting news; let all your exulting breasts reverberate, let all your harmonious tongues echo back our glorious joy! For this my son was dead, and is alive again! This your brother was lost, and is found!"

And, irradiating thy soul with the light of his reconciled countenance, he says to *thee*, from a throne blazing with grace and glory, "Penitent believer, receive the adoption of a son. Because thou receivest my Son, my only-begotten Son, into thy heart, I admit thee into the family of the first-born: be thou blameless and harmless, a son of God without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom I allow thee to shine, as a burning light in a benighted world. Son, all that I have is thine; be ever with me, and thou shalt inherit all things. Yes, whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas; whether my first apostles, or my choice ministers, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come, all is thine; for thou art Christ's, and Christ is mine. As thou hast received him, so abide and walk with him, worthy of me unto all pleasing; being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in his knowledge, till thy faith is turned to sight, and I am all in all."

Start not, believing reader, at these sayings, as if they were too glorious to be credited. They are the true sayings of God. The Lord himself spoke them for thy comfort. They are the precious pearls, which I promised thee out of the unsearchable treasures of Christ; if swine

trample them under their feet, wear thou them on thy breast. Instead of being offended at their transcendent excellence, magnify the God of all consolation, who, having delivered up his own Son for us all, with him also freely gives us all things, consequently the richest mines of Gospel grace. And, giving vent to the just transports of thy grateful heart, cry out, with the beloved disciple, "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that *we* should be called the sons of God! Unto Him who *thus* loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests to God and his Father, in him be glory and dominion forever and ever." Amen.

THE END.

APPENDIX.

CONCERNING THE EVANGELICAL HARMONY THAT SUBSISTS BETWEEN LIVING FAITH AND LOVING OBEDIENCE.

THE mystery of our salvation is thus opened by St. Paul: by *grace* are ye saved, through faith which *worketh* by love. This apostolic declaration subdivides itself into the following propositions, which, on account of their clearness and importance, may with propriety be called *Gospel axioms.* 1. Ye are saved by *grace.* 2. Ye are saved through a faith which *works* by love. These propositions, like two adamantine pillars, support the whole doctrine of Christ concerning faith and works, grace and rewardableness, or mercy on God's part, and obedience on our own; a doctrine which, though clear as the day, has, nevertheless, been so obscured by endless controversies, that thousands of Protestants and Papists know it in its purity no more.

According to the first of these axioms, all that go to heaven, give divine grace the glory of their salvation; because they are all saved by mere favor, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ. And, according to the second axiom, all that go to hell are obliged to clear divine justice, because they are condemned merely for their avoidable unbelief and obstinate disobedience. Upon this evangelical plan, the righteous are graciously rewarded, and the

unrighteous justly punished. The doctrines of God's mercy, in giving grace for Christ's sake, and of man's faithfulness in using it by Christ's help, sweetly coincide, and from their blessed union springs the just proportion of every part of the Gospel.

These axioms are so strongly maintained, and so frequently alluded to by the sacred writers, that whoever rejects either the one or the other, might as well reject one-half of the Bible. Attentively consider them asunder, and your unprejudiced reason will perceive their equity. Impartially compare them together, and, instead of finding them incompatible—as some prepossessed persons would persuade us they are—you will see that they harmonize in so exquisite a manner as to answer the most excellent ends in the world.

To give you an idea of their working in the breast of believers, permit me to compare them to those two opposite, and yet consentaneous motions of the heart, which anatomists call diastole and systole. The one forcibly dilates, the other powerfully contracts, that noble part of the human body; and both together, by means seemingly contrary, cause the circulation of the blood, and diffuse vital powers through all the animal frame. Just so passive faith and active love. The one perpetually receives favors from God, the other perpetually bestows them upon man; and thus, by continually performing their contrary—not contradictory—offices, they make spiritual life circulate through the believer's soul,

and enable him to diffuse kindness and good works throughout the social body, of which he is a member.

From the animal, pass we to the planetary world, and we shall see another striking emblem of the harmonious opposition which subsists between the two Gospel axioms. There we eminently discover the centripetal and the centrifugal force. Though opposed to each other, they are, nevertheless, so admirably joined together, that from their exquisite combination results the harmonious dance of the spheres: I mean the circular motions of the planets around the sun, and around each other. Such is the wonderful effect of evangelical promises and legal precepts, when they meet in a due proportion in an upright heart. The promises, which are all wrapped up in the first Gospel axiom, powerfully draw believers to Christ, who is the Sun of righteousness, and the center of the Christian system. The precepts which the second axiom necessarily supposes, drive them forward in the straight line of duty. Being thus delightfully attracted and powerfully impelled, like planets of a different magnitude, in the firmament of the Church, believers rapidly move in the orb of evangelical obedience, where the original light of Christ warmly shines into their own souls, and their borrowed light mildly gleams upon their fellow-mortals.

If ever you saw a person thus swiftly and evenly moving in the immense circle of a religious and social duty, freely receiving all from

his God, and freely imparting all to his neighbor, you have seen one of the stars in the Lord's right hand; you have seen one who practically holds the two Gospel axioms; one who believes as a sinner and works as a believer; one in whose heart the doctrines of faith and works, free grace and free obedience, divine faithfulness, and human fidelity, are justly balanced; one who keeps at an equal distance from the dreadful rocks upon which Antinomian believers, and antichristian workers, are daily cast away. In a word, you have seen an adult Christian, a man who adorns the doctrine of Christ our Savior in all things.

If the two Gospel axioms are of such importance, that the health and vigor of every Christian flow from the proper union of their power in his heart, is it not deplorable to see so many people every-where rising against them? Self-conceited moralists violently attack the first axiom, and self-humbled Solifidians will give the second no quarter. Those opposed assailants have all, I grant, a zeal for God; but not according to knowledge; for the former know not that they rob God of his glory, and the latter do not consider that they pour upon him our shame. The one refuses to acknowledge him the grand Author of our bliss; the other, to mend the matter, represents him as the grand contriver of our ruin. Both, nevertheless, have truth on their side; but, alas! it is only a part of the truth, as it is in Jesus; and truth divided,

like an animal cut through the middle, is dreadfully mangled, if not entirely destroyed.

You are also desired to observe, judicious reader, that as a just proportion of sail and ballast, next to a favorite wind, makes a ship sail with speed and safety, so the just balance of the two Gospel axioms, next to the Spirit of God, makes a believer run swiftly and safely the race that is set before him. He does not properly run, he merely hops in the way of truth, who, discarding one of the Gospel axioms, moves only upon the other. Antinomian Laodiceans, therefore, and antichristian Pharisees are equally blamable. For the piety of the former stands only upon the first axiom; and the devotion of the latter has no other basis than the second. The one will hear of nothing but faith; the other will be told of nothing but works. But the sound believer is for a faith that works righteousness.

Faith unfeigned, and obedient love, are of equal importance to the true Christian. Those precious graces which answer to the Gospel axioms like a well-proportioned pair of heavenly steeds, mutually draw the steady chariot of his profession across the valleys of discouragement, and over the hills of difficulty, which he meets with in his way to heaven. If I might carry on the allegory, I would observe that all the advantage which the right-hand steed has over the other, is, that it is the first put in the traces; but this is no proof of his superiority, for he

will be taken off at the gate of heaven, and obedient love alone shall have the honor of drawing the Christian's triumphal car through the realms of glory.

Reader, if in theory and practice you maintain both Gospel axioms; if, instead of setting up the one in opposition to the other, you stand upon the Scriptural line in which they harmonize, you have surmounted the greatest difficulty there is in the Christian religion—you hold the faith once delivered to the saints. And now prepare to contend for it; arm yourself for the fight; for Antinomian believers will attack you on the left hand, and Pharisaic unbelievers on the right. Be not afraid of their number; patiently receive their double fire. They may gall one another, but they can not hurt you. Truth is great, and love powerful; if you fight under their glorious banners, though the arrows of contempt and the brands of calumny will fly thick around you, you shall not be dangerously wounded. Only take the shield of faith, with this motto, "By grace I am saved through faith," and quench with it the fiery darts of self-conceited legalists; put on the breastplate of righteousness, with this inscription, "Faith works by righteous love, the mother of good works." This piece of celestial armor will keep off the heaviest strokes of self-humbled Gospelers. And, animated by the Captain of your salvation, through the opposite forces of those adversaries urge your evangelically-legal way, till you exchange the sword of the Spirit for a

golden harp, and your daily cross for a heavenly crown.

Such is the happy medium that the author of this book desires to recommend. Some time ago he thought himself obliged to oppose good, mistaken men, who, in their zeal for the first Gospel axiom, wanted to represent the second as a "dreadful heresy." And now he lets these papers see the light, not only to prove to the freethinkers of his parish that the first axiom is highly rational, but to convince the enemies of the second axiom, that, though he has exposed their mistakes with regard to works, he receives the genuine doctrines of grace as cordially as they; and is ready, Scripturally and rationally, to defend salvation by faith against the most plausible objections of self-righteous moralists.

He just begs leave to observe that the preceding pages guard the first Gospel axiom; that the Four Checks to Antinomianism guard chiefly the second; that the equal Check to Pharisaism and Antinomianism guards both at once; and that those tracts contain a little system of practical and polemical divinity, which, it is hoped, stands at an equal distance from the errors of moral disbelievers and immoral believers.

This book is chiefly recommended to disbelieving moralists, who deride the doctrine of salvation by grace through faith in the day of conversion, merely because they are not properly acquainted with our fallen and lost estate. And the Checks are chiefly designed for disbelieving Antinomians, who rise against the doctrine of a

believer's salvation by grace through the works of faith in the great day, merely because they do not consider the indispensable necessity of evangelical obedience, and the nature of the day of judgment.

In the Appeal, the careless, self-conceited sinner is awakened and humbled. In the Address, the serious, humbled sinner, is raised up and comforted. And in the Checks, the foolish virgin is reawakened, the Laodicean believer reproved, the prodigal son lashed back to his Father's house, and the upright believer animated to mend his pace in the way of faith, working by love, and to perfect holiness in the fear of God.

THE END.

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